

Editor's Note

This Journal and others have published several papers^{1,2} which have warned of the dangers of professional licensing by the government. Licensing laws lack Biblical, economic, and research support for their stated purpose of "protecting the public." What was only a hint of using licensing to enforce social policy a few years ago has now become an accepted reality in some states.

A recent national newspaper article described the loss of driving licenses by eight "deadbeat dads" in Maine.³ These fathers had not paid child support despite several warnings. The Maine legislature passed the Family Financial Responsibility Act in 1993 which empowered the Human Services Commissioner to suspend both driving and professional licenses. Mr. Peter Fore, a spokesman for Human Services, declared, "If someone has a driver's and professional license, we'll go after both of them." In addition, President Clinton's \$9.3 billion welfare reform proposal recently sent to Congress would require that all states be able to suspend the driving and professional licenses of delinquent parents.

The Bible exhorts us to support our families; those who do not are "worse than an unbeliever" (I Timothy 5:8b). However, any civil government penalty should be clearly related to the crime. State licensing laws were not passed as a means of promoting social policy. The changing use of licensing laws allows for increasing power of government to demand obedience to other government policies related to socialized medicine, humanistic education, etc. As a society, we have failed thus far to heed God's warning in Proverbs 13:15 that "Good understanding wins favor, but the way of the unfaithful is hard."

In His Name,

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References

1. Neumann, J.K., Licensing of Health Care Professionals From a Biblical Perspective. *Journal of Biblical Ethics in Medicine*, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 21- 26, 1988.
2. Holzer, H.M., The Physician's License: An Achilles Heel? *The Journal of Legal Medicine*, Vol. 12, pp. 201-220, 1991.
3. Adams, G., "Deadbeat dads" lose license in Main. ALP story in *Johnson Cay Press*, Vol. 74, No. 324, pp. 1,6, 1994 (June 28.)