Motor Vehicle Division proposes digital driver's licenses

Written by gallupsun
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SANTA FE — The New Mexico Motor Vehicles Division today announced on Jan. 18 it is proposing legislation that will allow it to develop and issue electronic driver's licenses and identification cards.

Senate Bill 88, sponsored by Sen. Roberto "Bobby" J. Gonzales of Ranchos de Taos, would authorize the MVD to offer electronic credentials to customers at no additional cost to their physical licenses and identification cards.

"Technology is always changing, and this bill will ensure that New Mexico can be at the forefront of the movement toward electronic licenses," Gonzales said.

Eight states, including neighboring Colorado and Arizona, currently offer mobile licenses to their residents, and 10 other states are in various stages of development.

"We're really excited about the prospect of being able to offer customers a new, convenient and secure means of identification," Taxation and Revenue Secretary Stephanie Schardin Clarke said.

Some Transportation Security Administration facilities and businesses are already accepting electronic credentials. Law enforcement agencies in New Mexico are not yet accepting electronic credentials but are expected to adopt the necessary technology to do so as the credentials become more widely available. Customers will still need to carry their physical credentials.

Under the bill, MVD will develop the interfaces needed for the licenses to be used with digital wallets in a manner that ensures the security of customers' data.
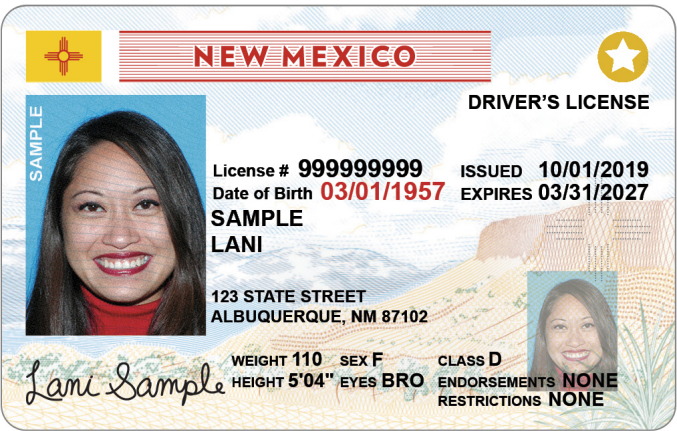
When opened on a smart phone or similar device, the electronic license or identification card displays a simplified version of the printed credential, with more detailed data encrypted in the file. The detailed credential information is accessed by a reading device programmed with

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digital keys to unlock the data.

Electronic credentials can be updated in real time, such as when MVD receives an address update from a driver or when a license is suspended or revoked.