

The 9/11 Commission may have shifted the balance of power in favor of 9/11FSA's goals

A newsletter for members and friends of 9/11 FSA regarding our recent activities in the Congress and elsewhere as well as other positive developments across the country was being compiled when the 9/11 Commission issued its report. Since that report provides major support for immigration reformers, it is the subject of today's letter.

The Commission's report addresses the issues that 9/11 FSA has been working on for the past two and a half years: illegal immigration and a more secure system for issuing identification.

Following is an excerpt from page 390 of the report:

It is elemental to border security to know who is coming into the country. Today more than 9 million people are in the United States outside the legal immigration system. We must also be able to monitor and respond to entrances between our ports of entry, working with Canada and Mexico as much as possible. There is a growing role for state and local law enforcement agencies. They need more training and work with federal agencies so that they can cooperate more effectively with those federal authorities in identifying terrorist suspects. All but one of the 9/11 hijackers acquired some form of U.S. identification document, some by fraud. Acquisition of these forms of identification would have assisted them in boarding commercial flights, renting cars, and other necessary activities.

Recommendation: Secure identification should begin in the United States. The federal government should set standards for the issuance of birth certificates and sources of identification, such as drivers licenses. Fraud in identification documents is no longer just a problem of theft. At many entry points to vulnerable facilities, including gates for boarding aircraft, sources of identification are the last opportunity to ensure that people are who they say they are and to check whether they are terrorists.⁴¹

There is much good news for us just on this page of the report, but there is more. The Commission will release four unclassified studies written by the staff covering terrorism financing; border security, immigration and visa policy; aviation and transportation security. Also, at its release of the report the Commission pledged to work with the 9/11 Families for implementation of the reforms.

By including in its report the fact that millions of unidentified people in the US who are "outside the legal immigration system" (illegal aliens) the Commission is clearly saying that such people are a threat to our nation's security, although we will have to wait and see what specific reforms their staff reports call for.

The Commissioners also said that state and local law enforcement have a "growing role" to play. This is a clear slap in the face to those politicians like Gov. Balducci of Maine who have instituted "sanctuary policies" forbidding police to cooperate with US immigration officials.

The Commission recommended national standards for issuance of birth certificates, drivers' licenses and other forms of I.D. If implemented nationwide, secure drivers' licenses will have a very significant impact on illegal aliens and future illegal immigration because:

- An illegal is a person without any secure documentation or verifiable identity and so will not be able to procure any ID that would be worthy of the term "secure."
- If a system for secure ID is adopted, both security and legitimacy will be restored to our drivers' licenses. Once the DL (or state ID issued by a DMV) is recognized as secure, all adults lacking one or the other will immediately be marked as not legitimate.

When the DL becomes widely accepted proof of legal presence, and its lack equal proof of illegal status, the implications for those who would employ illegals becomes clear. In this and nearly every way, the ability of illegal aliens and the unknown terrorists among them to hide in US society will become far more difficult. It is likely that, deprived of work much of the illegal population will repatriate itself, thus making it even more difficult for terrorists to hide in plain sight.

In summary, the Commission has called for a secure ID system, has given official recognition to the threat presented by a huge population of unidentified alien law violators, has called for more state and local cooperation and has promised to work with the families for reform.

In the future it will be extremely difficult for politicians and newspapers to dismiss our calls for reform.