



July 13, 2003

Breaking News

search



Sen. Ketron Cites Driver's License ID Improvements

by Jesse Hughes, Senate Republican Press Secretaru
posted July 11, 2003

NASHVILLE--Senator Bill Ketron (R-Murfreesboro) notes that state law has recently changed regarding the issuance of Tennessee driver's licenses and that the Department of Safety can no longer accept the Matricula Consular Card as a valid form of identification.

"I think this law is a step towards helping to secure the state of Tennessee both from illegal immigrants and also from those who may wish to do harm to this great country of ours or to its citizens," stated Senator Ketron, the Senate sponsor of the bill.

"These matricula consular cards do not legalize the status of any immigrant. Nor can they be legally used to obtain immigration or citizenship benefits. Their sole purpose seems to provide a free pass around our laws as a substitute passport for those who do not have or who are not entitled to have a passport from their home countries. We do not need to be in the business of providing driver's licenses to those who have not established their true identity so that they are 'now free to move about the country.'

"The FBI provided a statement to Congress on June 26th of this year about these cards. That statement indicates that these matricula consular cards are ripe for fraud and can even be used by terrorists because the underlying documentation provides little, if any, certainty about the person's name, age, or even nationality," continued Senator Ketron.

Prior to that June 26th FBI testimony, Tennessee recognized the problem and took corrective action. Public Chapter 351 (<http://www.state.tn.us/sos/acts/103/pub/pc0351.pdf>) took effect on June 13, 2003, when House Bill 1705/Senate Bill 1781 was signed into law. The bill passed the House unanimously on May 7 and then passed with the unanimous consent of the Senate on May 27. PC 351 prohibits the acceptance of matricula consular cards, or Certificado de Matrícula Consular, by the Department of Safety as proof of identification for driver license application and issuance purposes. The state statute now clearly and unmistakably instructs the Department of Safety: The department shall not accept matricula consular cards as proof of identification for driver license application and issuance purposes.

Senator Ketron also cites a statement from a June 21, 2003, WorldNetDaily.com

article, Congress takes up ID cards for illegals: Hearings focus on what critics call legitimacy for lawbreakers. "The only use the matricula consular has as an identification card is that it identifies illegal aliens, and any U.S. institution that accepts the card is violating the federal law [that] prohibits 'encouraging' illegal aliens to remain in the country," Craig Nelson, a spokesman for Friends of Immigration Law Enforcement, or FILE, told WorldNetDaily.

(http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=33191).

Senator Ketron says he will continue pushing for even tighter controls, including a law that would require a person to have a Social Security Number or else the proper Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services documentation in order to obtain a Tennessee driver's license. "I don't care what country a person comes from or what color they are, I just feel that they need a Social Security Number or proper documentation to show that they are properly in this country. I am open to any person who wants to enjoy the same benefits in this country that we have -- as long as they meet the same criteria as the rest of us."

Senator Ketron was elected on Nov. 5, 2002, to a four-year term from the 13th Senatorial District which includes all of Lincoln, Marshall, and Maury counties, as well as part of Rutherford County.

The House sponsors of HB 1705/SB 1781 were Representatives Tom DuBois, William Baird, Chris Crider, Susan Lynn, Donna Rowland, Phillip Johnson, and Diane Black.

[Email this to a friend](#)