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Exclusive: Federal REAL ID Act Does Not Create National Identity Card: That's a Good Thing

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It is absolutely necessary that the Federal REAL ID Act of 2005 remain solidly in place for the safety of all Americans. But many forces are at work to dismantle it, using falsehood after falsehood to do so. FSM Contributing Editor Peter Gadiel, president of 9/11 Families for a Secure America, enlightens us.

Federal REAL ID Act Does Not Create National Identity Card: That's a Good Thing

By Peter Gadiel

“The moon is made of green cheese.” “The Earth is flat.” These statements are false, but harmless, so even if someone tries to convince others that they are true, no danger can flow from them. Not all lies are so innocuous. Here's one that's just as false, but those who say it's true are paving the way for the next 9/11 attacks. The falsehood is this: “The Federal REAL ID Act of 2005 creates a national identity card, is a threat to your privacy and should be repealed.”

To understand the enormity of the danger this statement poses to our country it's necessary to recall a few facts about the terrorist plot that resulted in the murder of nearly 3000 innocent victims on September 11, 2001.

The 19 terrorists responsible for that holocaust had at least 35 and maybe as many as 68 or more *authentic* US driver's licenses. These licenses were issued by Virginia, Florida, Maryland, Arizona and California. According the independent 9/11 Commission, those driver's licenses allowed the terrorists to rent cars, rent apartments, open bank accounts, transfer money from the Middle East, get credit cards, buy airline tickets, and more. In short, the terrorists' US driver's licenses allowed them to obtain all the goods and services they needed to plan, rehearse, finance and carry out their conspiracy. And, said the Commission, on the morning of 9/11, the killers used their US licenses to breeze past security at airline gates and board the planes they turned into guided missiles. Janice Kephart, Counsel to the 9/11 Commission, told the US Senate Judiciary Committee on March 14, 2005: “*The hijackers' acquisition of driver's licenses and identification cards was clearly part of the hijackers' overall travel strategy.*”

American driver's licenses were, and remain, a key terrorist tool and by issuing licenses to the terrorists, five states unintentionally helped the terrorists commit mass murder.

That being the case, one would think the practice of issuing licenses to illegal aliens would have ended everywhere in the USA by September 12, 2001. Amazingly, that's not the case. A dozen states are still aiding the next 9/11 terrorists by giving them the same access to driver's licenses as Mohammed Atta and his co-conspirators enjoyed. (Among those states are New Mexico, Utah, North Carolina, Maryland, and Maine.) Of course, officials in these states don't say "we want to give licenses to terrorists." Instead what they say is: "We want illegal aliens to be able to get licenses."

There's a little problem with that policy. Every illegal alien is a person whose true identity is unknown, ("undocumented") meaning *no one has ever verified his identity*. Thus, any illegal alien can be a terrorist. And that means that when a state gives licenses to illegals they may be licensing the next 9/11 terrorists (or the next child rapist or Railroad Killer).

Why are states so intent on licensing illegals that they're willing to expose us all to such unspeakable dangers? The reason is simple: an illegal alien who can't drive to a job is a whole lot less valuable to the employer who wants to replace American workers with cheap, illegal alien labor. For this reason, the US Chamber of Commerce, the Wall Street Journal, beef packers, carpet manufacturers, agribusiness, the travel industry and more, they all want illegal aliens to be licensed.

Greedy employers are not alone in wanting to make licenses available to illegals and the unknown terrorists among them. The ACLU, the Ford Foundation, National Council of The Race, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), Communist Party of the United States, Green Party, Socialist Workers Party and other left wing groups want illegals licensed. So do the AFL-CIO and American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees and other unions whose membership consists largely of illegals or who provide taxpayer funded services to them.

These groups and many others provide buses and meals to get illegals and their allies to lobby at state legislatures. Members of 9/11 Families for a Secure America have been present when 600 illegals, led by unions or "philanthropic" groups have swarmed the halls of legislatures in Kansas, Illinois and other states demanding licenses (and in-state college tuition rates, welfare or other "rights") for illegals.

When legislators are subjected to such a continuous barrage of lobbying, human nature being what it is, they tend to cave in.

It was to encourage states not to give licenses to the next 9/11 killers that REAL ID was passed in 2005. That law says unless a state's issuing practices for licenses or (non-driver IDs) meet certain minimum standards, licenses from that state will not be recognized as valid identification at federal buildings or in federally regulated transactions. In other words, licenses from sub-standard states won't get you into a federal building or military base or be valid for buying a gun, as examples.

The standards that a state has to meet to maintain federal recognition are straightforward and plain common sense.

1. Licenses must have the license holder's real legal name. (Currently, some states permit use of nicknames or middle names, thus allowing people to conceal their identity and obtain multiple licenses.)
2. The DMV must keep a digitized copy of the photo that's on your license. (A digitized photo or a fingerprint guarantees that a single person does not hold multiple licenses obtained with disguises such as beards, different hairstyles, etc.)
3. The license must have a machine readable strip containing such information as the holder's name, date of birth, eyeglass requirements, etc. *REAL ID does NOT require*

personal information such as blood type, credit history, or other such personal non-driving related matters.

4. The issuing state must verify with the Social Security Administration that the applicant has provided a valid SSN that actually belongs to him or her. Non-citizens who are not eligible for SSNs must show their US visas or other federally issued documents showing that they are legally in the United States.

5. The issuing state must join other states in creating a database so that the limited information they obtain in the process of issuing licenses can be accessed by other states. This will permit, for example, a cop in California who arrests a guy selling cocaine who shows him a Maine license actually to check and be sure the license is real and the guy he's arresting really is the guy to whom Maine issued the license.

6. Licenses issued to aliens with visas must expire on the same date as the visa expires.

Here is what REAL ID will accomplish:

1. It will prevent terrorists and illegal aliens from obtaining US drivers licenses.
2. It will prevent individuals whose licenses are revoked for say, drunk driving, in one state from getting license under an assumed name in another state or in the same state.
3. It will make it virtually impossible to steal another person's identity.
4. It will provide some important side benefits as well, making it far more difficult for people to obtain welfare fraudulently or escape parental support obligation, and it will prevent non-citizens from voting.

Here is what REAL ID DOES NOT REQUIRE

1. It does NOT require you to carry your license, except when you're driving a car on a public road.
2. It does NOT allow police officers to "demand your papers," unless of course you are involved in a traffic stop, or are questioned in relation to a crime. In other words there's no requirement to identify yourself to police in any circumstance not already covered by tradition and law.
3. It does NOT require or authorize states to obtain personal information about you not related to your ability to drive.
4. It does NOT authorize states to obtain information about your credit history, blood type, health history, gun ownership, education, your parents, your travels outside the country, employment, club memberships, or political involvement.
5. It does NOT authorize including such information on the magnetic strip on the back of the license nor in any data base containing your basic license information. There is no authorization for putting microchips in licenses for containing personal information.

Although REAL ID is not yet in force, a coalition of open borders lobbies has organized to repeal it; the most dangerous and well funded of the repeal lobbies is the ACLU. It's so-called "Technology and Liberty Project" led by one Barry Steinhardt has used half truths and outright falsehoods to create a demand for the repeal of REAL ID. The ACLU on its websites (<http://www.realnightmare.org/>) and (<http://www.aclu.org/safefree>) make many false statements. It claims that: REAL ID will create a "national ID"; increase identity theft; cost the states billions of dollars; subject applicants to great inconvenience and delay at their motor vehicle bureaus; "steeply" increase the cost of a drivers license; create a bureaucratic "quagmire."

In reality, most states already reach most of REAL ID's standards. For example after the 1993 attacks on the World Trade Center, New York Governor George Pataki and his DMV Commissioner Ray Martinez implemented the practices contained in REAL ID and as they did so, they actually reduced the number of DMV employees, increased speed of service to customers, and reduced waiting times. In addition, Mr. Martinez informed me New York actually saved

taxpayer money by catching deadbeat parents and welfare cheats who'd used multiple identities to escape their obligations or cheat the system.

The truth is that the ACLU isn't really worried about the security, privacy, time or money of American *citizens*. The true motive for its objections to REAL ID is that it will make it harder for *illegal aliens* to enter and remain in the US. But ACLU's lies about REAL ID are effective: on January 25 the Maine legislature passed a resolution demanding that Congress repeal REAL ID and it gloats it will eventually succeed in convincing Congress to repeal the law.

One of the great ironies in the growing movement to repeal REAL ID is that many conservatives have swallowed the ACLU's propaganda and have joined forces with them. (In New Hampshire, for example, a Libertarian member of the state's House of Representatives has succeeded in persuading a majority Republicans to join Democrats in demanding repeal. Other states are feeling heat from conservatives.)

But ask yourself these questions. When there's another 9/11; and another after that; how strong will the pressure be to sacrifice our liberty to preserve our safety? How strong will the demands be for a true National ID after a second or third 9/11? In the panic that will ensue it will be difficult to avoid demands from Charles Schumer and his ilk for a *true* national I.D. as is required in France.

Those of us who really are concerned about privacy, terrorism, crime by illegal aliens, identity theft and many other threats to American security must recognize that REAL ID as the only way to forestall calls for true National ID cards. These Americans must oppose the ACLU and demand implementation of REAL ID.

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