

P15-a\_Americas's Real ID Update.

Airport Warning Signs for Travelers.

Signs are popping up at many airports, warning travelers that, a year from now, their driver's licenses or ID cards might be rejected. The signs declare, starting on January 22, 2018 if your card is produced by a state which is not compliant with REAL ID's security standards, it will not be accepted. You will need to present an alternative, "acceptable" form of identification if you intend to board a plane. If you don't know which IDs are "acceptable", you must visit "tsa.gov." The airport signs list nine non-compliant states. Of course, this list changes as states change their procedures, and must be continually updated. It is up to you, as an individual traveler, to determine what you must do to comply with federal travel regulations. Perhaps the presence of the warning signs will prompt travelers to urge their state leaders to move forward with complete compliance, before waivers, extensions and postponements are exhausted.

---

REAL ID Compliance Extended, Again.

When the REAL ID Act was signed into law in 2005, who could have imagined this driver's license security legislation would not be fully implemented until 2020? That's fifteen years later! Yet, here we are today, twelve years after REAL ID was passed by Congress, and the law continues to generate contention, controversy and confusion. Also, the federal government's shifting position on the enforcement of deadlines has created an unnecessary level of bewilderment. By the way, if the Department of Homeland Security has already determined that your state is "compliant", you will have until October 1, 2020 to upgrade your card to REAL ID standards. But that may change. What About My State?

As of December 2016, when TSA began posting the airport signs, there were only 24 states and Washington, D.C., which produced licenses compliant with REAL ID standards. Most remaining states have an extension through October 10, 2017. If you are unsure about what to do about the REAL ID Act in your state, you can check online for the status of your state at Homeland Security, Current Status of States/Territories: [www.dhs.gov/current-status-states-territories](http://www.dhs.gov/current-status-states-territories). Preventing Terrorism or Controlling Americans?

Critics claim that the REAL ID Act coerces state governments into turning driver's licenses and state ID cards into a heavy-handed tool of the Department of Homeland Security. Citizens of non-compliant states are threatened with the loss of such privileges as being allowed to board an airplane or entering a federal building. Opponents of REAL ID have referred to the bill as an "internal passport", that is, a special form of identification and control for domestic travel. The creator of the REAL ID Act, Representative James Sensenbrenner, asserted that REAL ID is all about solving illegal immigration and preventing terrorists from entering the country. However, Senator Ron Paul countered that REAL ID is all about tracking and controlling Americans. For Americans to be tracked and controlled, someone must first verify they are indeed Americans, and that is why the states' departments of motor vehicles will have added duties.

---

DMVs to Verify Citizenship.

Detractors of REAL ID emphasize the law turns state motor vehicle department workers into federal immigration officials. You see, REAL ID gives the DMV worker the added responsibility of verifying the citizenship of all those who apply for a REAL ID-compliant driver's license or identification card. Another

controversy is the way the law requires states to share their databases of driver's information across a national data network. This is the same kind of database which would be essential for the creation of a national identification system.

Does REAL ID Create a National ID Database?

In response to the claims that REAL ID creates such a national database, the Department of Homeland Security says on its website, "...REAL ID does not build a national database nor does it grant the Federal Government or another state access to a state's driver's license data." However, the Identity Project has testified that one of the goals of the REAL ID Act is a "distributed national ID database," in which a single query routed through the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators' data "hub" can retrieve driver information from every state ID database. The Cato Institute assures us that "...There is absolutely a national database system, equivalent to a single, centralized database, and it is required by the REAL ID law." "Technically," explains the Cato website, "the database is not actually 'federal', because it is operated by the states and the AAMVA, 'at the federal government's behest'."

However, it would be quite a stretch to try to explain how the REAL ID database is not a national ID database, for several reasons. First, it is national, in that it is used throughout the country. Next, it is legally required with no provision for opting out. And finally, it is used for identification. Look at it this way; if it works like a national ID, sounds like a national ID, and looks like a national ID, it's a "national ID". Also, all data printed on REAL ID-compliant licenses and ID cards is nationally standardized, and all cards can be scanned using the same readers and software.

---

REAL ID Data "Hub" Challenges the Fourth Amendment.

The national REAL-ID Act "hub" software and central database has been developed by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators. AAMVA avoids much public scrutiny because it is not a federal agency. It is a "private" nonprofit "trade association", which is not subject to public record laws. The Fourth Amendment requires the government to allow Americans to be secure "in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures." In other words, because of the Constitution, Americans have an expectation about their right to control what others see of their private information. Because the REAL ID data "hub" compromises this constitutional right, it has inflamed an ongoing and intense opposition.

---

Opposition Continues.

REAL ID legislation has met with staunch resistance from many states, some going so far as to pass laws against compliance. At one point, sixteen states had passed anti-REAL ID legislation. In other words, it would have been against the law for someone in those states to use state funds to help comply with REAL ID. In May 2007, Epic.org announced that forty-three groups had joined the campaign to "Stop REAL ID." And the opposition has continued to this day.

---

Minnesota Pressured to Comply.

Recently, the Department of Homeland Security has been intensifying efforts to coerce state leaders into taking compliance action. For example, in the spring of 2016, under pressure from the DHS, the state legislature of Minnesota created a special "Legislative Working Group on Real ID." The Identity Project, a national civil liberties organization, testified before the group of their concern that "the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is trying to mislead the legislature and the people of Minnesota about

the REAL ID Act.” The Identity Project claimed that the DHS intended to “frighten” Minnesota into compliance with federal requests “that have no legal basis.” They also asserted that, “No law and no publicly-disclosed rule requires anyone to have or show any ID to travel by air within the U.S.”

Jim Harper, of the Competitive Enterprise Institute, testified last February before a Minnesota Senate Judiciary Committee, that Minnesota should not implement REAL ID, as it is “a misdirected policy, both nationally and for the states.” “It is a weak security measure,” Harper continued, “creating a national ID that exposes Americans to loss of privacy, hacking, and identity fraud risks.” Funding for this assault on privacy must come from somewhere, and that financial resource would have to be the American people themselves.

---

Financial Burdens for States and Americans.

While some states move forward with their efforts to become compliant with the REAL ID, others continue to push back against federal overreach. These states claim that the federal government is overstepping its authority, collecting too much information about citizens, and putting their privacy in jeopardy. Still other states oppose implementation of the REAL ID Act because of the estimated cost. The REAL ID Act is an “unfunded federal mandate”. This means that most of the cost of changing over millions of licenses and ID cards is born by the states. The states then must raise the fees for obtaining new licenses, shifting some of the financial burden to the person who is simply trying to exchange a valid license for the new REAL ID format. In addition to the higher fees, increased administrative burdens for the states, and longer lines and repeat visits to the DMV for individuals, create a bureaucratic nightmare that leaves no one happy.

---

DHS Compliance Summary.

Antagonism from some states seems to have subsided in the face of Homeland Security's warnings. The Department of Homeland Security's REAL ID website currently lists 26 states that are compliant with the REAL ID Act. Seventeen states or territories have an extension through October 10, 2017. Seven states or territories have a “limited extension” through June 6, 2017 and five states are non-compliant. The non-compliant states are Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana and Washington.

---

REAL ID Creates Privacy Issues.

REAL ID was attached to a bill providing tsunami relief and military appropriations in 2005, and passed with little debate and no hearings. When the final regulations concerning the implementation of REAL ID were released in 2008, DHS Secretary Chertoff admitted that the REAL ID card would be used for a wide variety of purposes, unrelated to the law that authorized the system, including employment verification and immigration determination. He also revealed that the Department of Homeland Security would not prevent the use of the card by private parties for non-government purposes. Chertoff went on to disclose that “embracing REAL ID” would mean it would be used to “cash a check, hire a baby sitter, board a plane or engage in countless other activities.” We need to realize that the implementation of REAL ID is a step in the direction of the total control of every human activity.

---

REAL ID on the Way to Total Control.

The thinking behind REAL ID was that the only way to go after terrorists is to be able to track and control everybody.

REAL ID mandates that every American carry, and be prepared to present, at airports and federal facilities, a federally compliant driver's license or state-issued ID card, which is produced by their state's motor vehicle department. The cards will be coded with birth information, social security data, facial recognition scans and biometric identification information.

Is REAL ID the Beginning of the Mark of the Beast?

Revelation warns about a false Messiah, the Antichrist, who will be given power over "all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." (Revelation 13:7) The Bible also describes the False Prophet, who causes all to receive "a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads." Without the mark, or the name of the "beast", the Antichrist, or the number of his name, no one will be able to buy or sell. (Revelation 13:16-17). In practical terms, under Real ID, Americans must have a government number to hold jobs and have bank accounts.

The Mark of the Beast prophecy makes one aspect of the information demanded by the REAL ID Act particularly alarming to Bible students. REAL ID requires biometric information, which includes fingerprints or eye scans. The Mark of the Beast prophecy states that the mark will be in the hand or the forehead. (Revelation 14:9). Our fingerprints are in our hands, and our eyes are in our foreheads. REAL ID requires that the information in each state's database be linked with the databases of the other states. Once your information is placed in the federalized database, the federal government can then instantly access your personal information. Real ID would condense all that information into an easily-accessed database for the first time. Without your compliant identification card, you won't be able to board an airplane, open a bank account or access any service that depends on federally-approved identification. We will be controlled by a tragically-flawed central authority.

---

State Sovereignty Attacked by a Flawed System.

The significance of the REAL ID Act extends beyond disputes over unfunded mandates and search and seizure issues. REAL ID is a direct assault on state sovereignty. It usurps the authority of the states to institute their own driver's license regulations. Because the law creates a centralized registry of personal data, it also increases the potential for fraud and identity theft .

The Department of Homeland Security has been issuing waivers to states which promise to work on compliance. This illustrates a flaw in the system. The federal government has passed a law intended to prevent another 9/11-style attack, but it has allowed states to seek waivers for over a decade. If the law is essential for national security, it should be enforced immediately. If it is not crucial for our protection, it should be repealed.

Dangerous Threats to Liberty Five REAL ID enforcement deadlines have come and gone since the law was passed in 2005, because states, which are aware of its dangers and threats to liberty, have continued to refuse to comply. REAL ID is not just another type of state driver's license; it is a federally-controlled ID card. Government officials will impose an ever-expanding agenda of "official purposes" for which it must be used, if we allow it to happen.