

Dear Delegate:

The Coalition for a Secure Driver's License (CSDL) urges the Commonwealth of Virginia to continue its commitment to comply with the federal REAL ID Act. CSDL is a non-partisan, crime prevention not for profit organization providing research results and educational programs to the public and to state and federal officials regarding the importance of secure identity documents.

House Bill No. 1587, however, would leave Virginia vulnerable to a whole host of identity related crimes and create unfair burdens for Virginia citizens.

When the investigation into the 9/11 terrorists began, federal investigators found that thirteen of the hijackers had obtained driver's licenses or state issued ID cards from a Virginia DMV office shortly before the event. Further, they had used those Virginia issued documents to board the planes at Dulles and other airports because they correctly believed they would not trip federal watch lists.

Virginia's legislators took immediate steps to require improvements to the security and issuance process of the Virginia State Driver's License and Identity card in compliance with the REAL ID Act. The Virginia DMV is at the point of rolling out more than twenty new security measures that will (1) move the state close to compliance with REAL ID regulations (2) reduce the risk of counterfeiting and identity fraud (3) further reduce the risk that Virginia may again be the source of identity documents for foreign terrorists.

CSDL recognizes that citizens have raised cost, privacy, and constitutional concerns surrounding REAL ID compliance. Consequently, we are preparing this analysis to allay those concerns.

- **PL109-13 (REAL ID) regulations do not impose a significant cost increase on Virginia citizens.** *Virginia's early investments in process improvement have made it close to compliance with benchmark requirements for 2009. Additionally, Virginia has been awarded \$2.6 million in federal grants for REAL ID compliance.*
- **REAL ID does not violate individuals' privacy rights.** *REAL ID actually enhances personal privacy by incorporating tougher data and facility standards for states. DHS specifically addressed nine privacy improvements of the final rule. The release of the information contained on REAL ID compliant licenses is prohibited by federal law under the Federal Driver's Privacy Protection Act.*
- **REAL ID does not violate states' constitutional rights.** *The issuance of cards and the maintenance of license databases are still in states' hands.*

We are attaching our analysis of REAL ID, and we strongly believe that compliance with this federal law – Public Law No. 190-13 – will enhance the safety of all Virginians. Please do not hesitate to contact me with additional questions.

Sincerely,

Andrew Meehan, Coordinator of State Programs
Coalition for a Secure Driver's License