



VIA FACSIMILE

June 4, 2007

Members of the United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

As the debate on immigration reform continues this week, we recognize the significant challenge that faces the U.S. Senate, and thank you for your efforts to fix a system that is clearly broken. As members of the Human Resource Initiative for a Legal Workforce – representing tens of thousands of U.S. employers and hundreds of thousands of human resource professionals – we write to express our deep concerns about the current employment verification provisions included in S. 1348, the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act.

While we strongly endorse the need for an effective, efficient and reliable electronic employment verification system, reliance on the current “Basic Pilot” – as mandated in the Senate immigration bill – is destined to fail and will not be supported by employers.

Fewer than 20,000 U.S. employers – out of over 6 million – are currently enrolled in the Basic Pilot verification program. To meet the timeline in the current Senate proposal, 20,000 employers per day would need to enroll. Even if the Basic Pilot’s hardware were upgraded and expanded to accommodate the surge of new employers, we are concerned with the inaccuracy of government data bases upon which it relies. Before the program becomes mandatory nationwide, there should be a requirement for the Social Security Administration and the Department of Homeland Security clean up their records and guarantee that information will be kept up-to-date.

The Senate bill would also require that the legal status of the entire U.S. workforce be re-verified within 3 years. This includes over 149 million Americans currently holding jobs. The system would be immediately overwhelmed and upwards of 20 million American citizens could face a bureaucratic nightmare in establishing their legal eligibility to work.

Even more problematic than the technical and bureaucratic issues with the Basic Pilot program is the continued reliance on paper identity documents as the foundation of the verification system. Basic Pilot can only confirm that the identity presented matches information in Social Security and DHS databases, and cannot validate that the person presenting identity documents is who he or she claims to be.

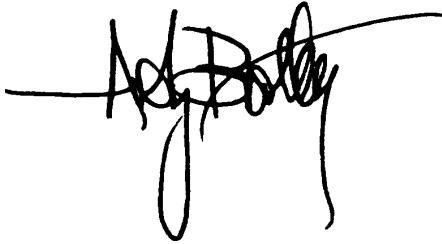
As we learned from the *Swift* plant raids by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, even if the databases were correct and the system reliable, the Basic Pilot does little to stop identity fraud. The rampant use of fraudulent documents is a glaring loophole that actually encourages identity theft.

Creating a secure, electronic employment verification system is the single most important element of immigration reform. Without it, the supply of jobs will continue to attract illegal immigrants, and the immigration reform effort will fail.


We urge the Senate to amend the current immigration reform bill to include provisions that would ensure a secure electronic employment verification system that would verify identity through the use of state-of-the-art technology, additional background checks and the voluntary use of biometric enrollment conducted by government certified private vendors. Our proposal will take the guesswork out of employment verification while protecting the identity and personal information of legal workers and preventing national origin or other related discrimination in the verification process.

Again, we thank you for addressing the important issue of immigration reform, including worksite enforcement reform. We look forward to working with the Senate to improve and strengthen the employment verification process.

Respectfully,



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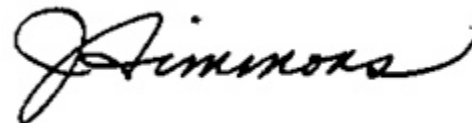
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