

For Immediate Release

Former Arizona State Senator Karen S. Johnson, June 17, 2008:

Gov. Napolitano Approves Prohibition on Real ID

Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano signed a bill today that prohibits the implementation of the REAL ID in Arizona. SB2677 received a Final vote of approval in the House last week by an overwhelming margin of 51 to 1. Napolitano's signature was uncertain until today when she signed the bill into law.

The bill prohibits implementation of the REAL ID Act of 2005, which was passed by Congress as part of a supplemental spending bill for tsunami relief and the War on Terror. The bill did not receive a hearing in either the House or the Senate, and the public was largely unaware of it until it had already been signed into law.

"Everyone thinks that the REAL ID is just about protecting us against terrorism," said co-sponsor Senator Karen Johnson (R-18). "But it really represents a cash cow for technology companies as well as the birth of the National ID card, complete with all the biometric information that technology can handle – face recognition, fingerprints, etc."

"Corporations which specialize in selling identity cards stand to gain millions of dollars in profits if the Real ID Act is implemented," said Johnson, "so, of course, they're eager for everyone to be required to carry a National ID card everywhere they go." Two of those corporations are Digimarc ID Systems and L-1 – the Number 1 and Number 2 companies for the manufacture of state driver's licenses and identity cards. L-1 is considered the main driver behind the REAL ID and last year had nearly \$100 million in federal contracts involving identity cards. Digimarc spent \$350,000 in the first six months of 2007 lobbying Congress on the Real ID Act. Apparently the two companies are soon to be merged, resulting in a powerhouse corporation, pushing the "identification-as-security" concept to the maximum in order to increase company profits as they add more and more biometric features to state driver's licenses.

"It's misguided to think that *identification* equals *security*," says Johnson. "Identification is just identification – it doesn't prove intent and it doesn't stop terrorists. Indeed, terrorists will forge documents – as they always have – to obtain the identification they want to commit crimes. Making U.S. citizens carry identity papers to board a plane or enter a government building stinks," says Johnson. "It's odious, onerous, and a violation of our civil liberties."

"I refuse to be tagged and numbered," said Johnson. "Requiring people to carry papers takes away their freedom. There are other, better ways to stop terrorism and to protect us against criminals. The federal government needs to butt out and let the states

handle driver licensing. It's not the business of the Dept. of Homeland Security to tell us how to run our state."

Real ID – SB2677

1. Proponents always claim that the sole purpose of the Real ID is to prevent another 9/11-type attack by disrupting terrorists travel. That is bogus. If the government really wanted to prevent such an attack, they would secure our borders, which would (1) cost less than implementing Real ID, (2) would be more effective at keeping terrorists out, and (3) would be less intrusive and less inconvenient for American citizens. Until the borders are secure, all the rosy pleas for the Real ID are just so much hogwash.
2. The Real ID will cost the states billions of dollars. The Dept. of Transportation estimates that in Arizona alone, it will cost \$40 to \$70 million to implement just in the first year, and \$15 to \$20 million in subsequent years. But they really don't have a clue – they don't know what the regulations are going to be yet. They are just estimating. It will depend on what the Rules say when they are finally issued.

They already do some things that will be part of the requirements. For example, they already check citizenship, or whether or not someone is legally authorized to be in the country. So that would not be an additional expense. But even factoring in that some things required by REAL ID are already being handled, the \$40 to \$70 million is over and above what we already do!!!

3. The Real ID is an invasion of privacy. Why should so much personal information be compiled on one place for so many people to have access to?
 - medical history
 - social security number
 - insurance information
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4. The Real ID increases the risk of Identity Theft. Identity theft is a major problem in Arizona already. Throwing everyone's personal information – including social security numbers, birth dates, medical information, driver's license and auto licensing information, etc. – into one massive data base just makes it easier for identity thieves to harvest identities for fraudulent purposes. The Real ID requires all Arizona driver's license information to be compiled with all the information for the other 49 states and the District of Columbia into one massive database that will be accessible by thousands of clerks and government employees throughout the country. This is a horrendous idea – an invitation to identity theft on a massive scale.