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House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

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Memorandum

TO: All House Members

FROM: Representative Fred Keller *FRK*

DATE: June 22, 2011

SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship memo – Real ID Nonparticipation Act

As you may be aware, in 2005, Congress passed the Real ID Act, creating national standards for the issuance of state driver's licenses and identification cards. Under enforcement of REAL ID, state driver's licenses will not be accepted for federal purposes – including boarding an aircraft or entering a federal facility – unless they reveal information such as full legal name, gender, address, date of birth, photograph and signature. The ID must also contain a "machine readable zone" that allows for the easy capture of all the data on the ID by stores or anyone else with a reader. Additionally, REAL ID requires that each state establish the ability to provide all the other states with access to the information contained in its motor vehicle database - creating, in effect, a single nationally distributed database operated by the states. States are required to retain a digital scan of source identity documents – including birth certificates and Social Security cards – for at least 10 years (or a paper copy for seven years).

The federal requirements under REAL ID would be completely unfunded mandates that would impose a significant financial burden on Pennsylvania. The National Governor's Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the American Association of Motor Vehicles predict that REAL ID will cost states \$11 billion. The State of Virginia estimates its compliance costs to be in the neighborhood of \$240 million.

REAL ID further threatens privacy rights by opening the door to the empowerment of the Department of Homeland Security to collect biometric data – including fingerprints and eye scans – as well as placing Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) chips in every American's driver's license. REAL ID offers no controls on what confidential data can be collected from driver's licenses, where and how long it can be stored, and who is authorized to obtain, share, trade or sell that information.

I intend to introduce legislation that would prohibit PennDOT or any other Commonwealth agency from participating in either the REAL ID Act or any regulations promulgated under the Act. This proposal would also authorize either the Governor or the Attorney General to file a court action to challenge the constitutionality of the REAL ID Act. Please know that sixteen other states have opted out of the federal REAL ID law.

If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, please contact Sharon Jones at (717) 787-3443 or via e-mail at sjones@pahousegop.com.