



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

February 9, 2005
(House)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 418 -- REAL ID Act of 2005

(Rep. Sensenbrenner (R) Wisconsin and 125 cosponsors)

The Administration strongly supports House passage of H.R. 418, to strengthen the ability of the United States to protect against terrorist entry into and activities within the United States. In particular, the legislation tightens procedures for non-citizen entry into and presence in the United States, facilitates the building of physical barriers where appropriate to protect U.S. borders, and facilitates the strengthening by the States of the standards for the security and integrity of drivers' licenses.

The Administration supports the provisions in H.R. 418 to strengthen the standards for issuance of drivers' licenses. The Administration will work with Congress to clarify the definition of "official purpose" for which licenses or identification cards may be accepted by Federal agencies.

The Administration will work with Congress to consider providing authority to the Secretary of Homeland Security to ensure individuals with licenses or identification cards that do not meet the full criteria in this bill could not use these documents to access non-Federal critical infrastructure or to operate certain large vehicles. The Administration will also work with Congress to consider biometric screening of individuals who cannot otherwise satisfactorily demonstrate citizenship or lawful immigration status. Biometric screening, which is applied to most entering classes of aliens through the US-VISIT program, would be a valuable tool in identifying possible links to terrorism.

The Administration supports the provision in H.R. 418 regarding asylum reform, provided that Congress includes a provision to rescind asylee adjustment caps and makes other technical changes to ensure the changes do not unintentionally create new barriers to asylum. The Administration also supports provisions tightening non-citizen entry, but notes that some of these provisions would require refinement to ensure consistency with foreign policy priorities.

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