

# Miami Herald

## **E-Verify doesn't work and will cost Florida jobs, money and human potential**

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With the effort to mandate that every Florida business use the inefficient, inaccurate and ineffective federal E-Verify employment-eligibility system gaining steam in the Florida Senate, it is important for Floridians to understand how devastating it would be to the state's economy. Some well-meaning people might see E-Verify as a solution, but here are the facts.

The Libertarian-leaning Cato Institute found that the federal E-Verify system delayed filling approximately 580,000 jobs from 2006 to 2016, and about 130,000 job-seekers were turned down in error. If employers are forced to rely on this error-ridden federal, 1,173,360 legal Florida workers could face job delays or lose their jobs. Moreover, legal foreign-born workers — including naturalized U.S. citizens — are more than 13 times more likely to receive a false disqualification under E-Verify. In addition, E-Verify is notoriously ineffective at stopping unauthorized employment.

In 2018, Florida's Constitutional Revision Commission defeated this same effort by a vote of 24-12 — a 2-to-1 ratio.

The commissioners who voted No included Lt. Gov. Jeannette Nunez, former Attorney General Pam Bondi and 22 other commissioners who understood that the measure could jeopardize more than 1 million Florida jobs, cost Florida employers \$4.7 billion and place an unfunded constitutional mandate on every business and employer in the state. They understood it was nothing more than a stealth tax on Florida citizens.

Finally, mandatory E-Verify disproportionately burdens Florida's small-business owners, farmers, nonprofits, churches and schools with thousands of dollars in start-up costs, workforce disruption and lost hours of work.

We are experiencing one of the best economies on record, and unemployment is hitting record lows. Florida businesses are struggling to find qualified workers who are the backbone of this success, and we don't need a few Tallahassee politicians throwing yet another obstacle in their way.