

How much do you trust Uncle Sam?

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The Senate Homeland Security Committee will hold an official mark up of the PASS ID bill on July 29, according to Chairman Joe Lieberman (ID-CT).

At best the bill is a less costly version of the REAL ID Act of 2005, at worst, critics claim, the bill moves America to pre-9/11 security standards.

States have until the end of the year to comply with the REAL ID law. It requires states to issue identification cards that verify an applicant's identity, date of birth, social security number, and legal presence in the United States among other things. The *federales* offered states no money to pay for the changes, which at the time was estimated to cost \$11 billion.

Beginning next year, you'll need a federally approved ID card to travel on an airplane, open a bank account, collect Social Security payments, or take advantage of nearly any government service. States will generally use driver licenses to accomplish the purpose.

On the immigration front, many like the bill because it requires visa holders to provide proof they are in the country legally to apply for a drivers license or benefits, at least theoretically. But the devil is in the details. What this, or a REAL ID lite, costs citizens in terms of liberty is too great to justify laws that are already not enforced possibly being enforced. Uncle Sam has looked the other way for too long to be trusted now?

Some see this as big brother taking over. For instance, Barry Steinhardt, director of the American Civil Liberties Union's technology and liberty program, says the law will result in businesses, demanding to scan the card, collecting the data and creating a national database for marketers.

Others see a national ID as a first step in a [nefarious first step](#) in a government, either national or world, take over. Just because it is a conspiracy doesn't make it wrong.

Since a few states have held out of the national plan, politicians are looking for a more palatable alternative. Ironically, the Senate, which didn't have the guts to debate a stand alone bill in 2005, but amended a must pass spending bill, has offered an alternative PASS ID (S. 1261).

According to the Cato Institute's Jim Harper, PASS ID removes the requirement that states "provide electronic access" allowing every other state to search their motor vehicles records. However, the bill would require states to confirm that "a person submitting an application for a driver's license or identification card is terminating or has terminated any driver's license or identification card" issued by another state.

One uses a [database to do either](#).

If politicians want to protect our borders, they must fully fund agencies responsible for doing just that. Then, independent inspectors, far removed from the political process, must be tasked with the career-long job of testing the systems. Most importantly, laws must be totally enforced. If they were in the past, Sept. 11, 2001, might never have happened.



Smoke spews from where World Trade Center towers stood.

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Author



Andy Arnold is an Examiner from Washington DC. You can see Andy's articles at:
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