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E-Verify Flaws Point to Authoritarian Future

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An Aug. 30 letter from Bill Bishop characterizes E-Verify as a panacea for control of illegal immigration (“[E-Verify Is a Key to Ridding U.S. of Illegal Immigrants](#)”). But a federal employment background-check system would be riddled with problems, not least of which is its effect on the freedoms of law-abiding, native-born Americans.

Among E-Verify’s challenges is its propensity to block Americans from working even though they are entitled to do so. That can happen without the worker finding out, sending him or her from employer to employer, being refused work for unspoken reasons. If E-Verify use grows, avoidance will persist as illegal immigrants deepen identity frauds and work under the table. The benefits of living and working in the U.S. are so great relative to work in their home countries that E-Verify can only have a minor effect on illegal immigrants’ behavior. Fining and jailing American restaurant owners and contractors is only a partial solution, and it is not an attractive one.

To minimize complications and counterattacks, “internal enforcement” of immigration law would ultimately require every working American to enroll in a U.S. national ID system. Such a system could then be turned to federal control of our access to financial services, health care and prescriptions, guns and ammunition, housing and more. We shouldn’t embrace the costs of E-Verify, which vastly outstrip the benefits, when we could increase legal immigration to meet U.S. economic demand for labor.

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