

SPOTLIGHT ON TYRANNY

Privatizing Texas Roads A "Rush To Sell The Crown Jewels Of Texas"

By Cathie Adams, President of Texas Eagle Forum

A long-awaited public hearing on the Trans Texas Corridor, TTC, finally took place on March 1st thanks to Senator John Carona, chairman of the Senate Transportation & Homeland Security Committee. Prior to the public hearing, some elected officials claimed that the only problem with the TTC was that farmers and ranchers did not want to lose their land, but testimonies proved otherwise.

As I sat through the nearly nine-hour hearing, it was clear that legislators who voted for HB 3588 in 2003 that created the TTC entirely misunderstood the bill. The hearing also exposed the incompetence of Transportation Commissioner Rick Williamson and the bureaucracy he oversees, the Texas Department of Transportation, TxDOT.

Senate Finance Chairman Steve Ogden called TxDOT "out of control," which was confirmed by state auditors. The TTC builders, for example, will petition the federal government for \$3.9 billion, yet TxDOT does not consider that taxpayer money! The state auditors also revealed that TxDOT has already spent \$90 million in taxpayer funds, including \$28 million in legal fees, \$28 million for environmental studies and allocated funds for engineering that were in reality spent on public relations.

Furthermore, the state auditors found that the TTC-35 master development would cost \$105 billion with its gross profits estimated to be \$523 billion. Such a magnificent profit caused lawmakers to question whether the state should build roads as they traditionally have or whether they should grant that right to private investors.

There was **unanimous agreement** about the need for new roads, largely created by the North American Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA, the 1994 treaty that was approved by a lame duck Congress and signed by former President Clinton. The **debate** was about who would build Texas roads: taxpayers or private investors in so-called public-private partnerships. And whether the contracts that create the public-private partnerships could be kept secret until after they are signed.

Testimonies exposed profound problems with public-private partnerships. Dennis Enright, a principal at NW Financial Group in Jersey City, N.J. who has been involved in dozens of public-private agreements, testified that governments are essentially trading future profits for upfront cash by letting private corporations run toll roads. Calling the contracts, Comprehensive Development Agreements, a "scheme," he told the legislators that motorists would pay higher tolls to foot the bill for the profits and steeper interest rates. His recommendation to legislators was to, "find out if it [road building] could be done by the public sector more efficiently. If it can, it's a vital public asset." He concluded that the cost of financing public-private partnerships is 50% more and that public ownership is more efficient.

A former member of the North Texas Tollway Authority called the rush to public-private partnerships a "rush to sell the crown jewels of Texas." State Highway 121, for example, would cost \$560 million to build, plus \$1.7 billion to maintain it for 50 years, yet a Comprehensive Development Agreement signed on February 28, 2007 pending

environmental studies is worth \$5.06 billion.

While Collin and Denton County motorists understand the need for new roads, they would be wise to inquire: Why sign a contract for double the cost of building / expanding and maintaining an existing state highway when public money could build it for less than half the cost? Why give the right to set tolls and collect them for the next 50 years to a private company with minimal oversight by the inept TxDOT? Would taxpayers be able to buy back the road that they paid for, and how much would it cost?

Current law would allow the TTC to set tolls at "market value" with only the oversight of the Transportation Commissioner. The current law's "non-compete clause" would cause parallel roads to fall into disrepair. These two provisions would eliminate alternate routes, which would then allow the private company to raise tolls and enhance traffic. TxDOT's Chief Financial Officer admitted that while toll rates may begin at 14.5 cents per mile, the projected increases could run up to 56.5 cents per mile, which prompted State Rep. Lois Kolkhorst to ask, "Do we need a middleman doing this for us? We can do it [build needed roads] ourselves."

This was the first opportunity for taxpayers to discuss with elected officials whether I-35 could be upgraded, rather than building a parallel route. TxDOT was unable to provide an answer to the legislators during the hearing.

David Stall of Corridor Watch, www.corridorwatch.org, expressed concern about signing Comprehensive Development Agreements with foreign companies to build, toll and maintain Texas roads for 50 years considering modern road needs could not have been known 50 years ago, in 1957, revealing the illogic in signing contracts through 2057

Margaret Byfield of Stewards of the Range, www.stewardsoftherange.org, exposed the stonewalling her organization received in their attempts to get open records concerning the TTC. After the threat of a lawsuit, some of the records were made public, but some remain secret. She called for the repeal of the TTC, calling it a contract of greed with foreign investors.

In my testimony, I asked legislators to stop pilfering funds from Texas' two highway funds: the State Highway Fund that is filled by our gas taxes and the Texas Mobility fund that is filled with money raised by bond sales. Both funds are supposed to be used to build and maintain Texas roads, but have been siphoned-off to pay for state employee pay raises, Medicaid ambulances, etc. In order to increase available road-building funds, Senator Carona has filed a bill to link the gas tax to inflation, but that will not fix the problem unless both highway funds are protected for their intended purpose. The legislature would do well to remember the TxDOT motto: Don't Mess With Texas! Texas has better roads than most other states and it will require fiscal discipline to continue to pay-as-we-go for our roads.

Cathie Adams - President of the Texas Eagle Forum.
Visit www.texaseagle.org for more information.



THE DEWEESE REPORT

WWW.AMERICANPOLICY.ORG

NAIS: Big Brother's Destruction of Small Farms and Civil Liberties

By Judith McGeary

The concept of an electronic national animal identification system was started back in the early 1990s, by technology companies seeking to expand their market, and large agricultural entities seeking to protect their ability to sell their mass produced meat on the world market.

Their efforts culminated in 2002, when the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA) proposed that the USDA develop a "national animal identification system" (NAIS). While NIAA may sound like a public interest organization, its membership reads like a who's who in industrial agriculture and technology, including entities such as Cargill Pork, Tyson, National Pork Producers Council, and Global Vet Link.

Notably, the NIAA developed the national animal identification system more than a year and a half **before** the first case of Mad Cow was found in the U.S. Over the course of three years, USDA and NIAA worked together to develop the NAIS and inform the large-

scale livestock producer community, while ignoring hundreds of thousands of people who will be affected.

THE FEDERAL PLAN

After it took up the task from Industry, the USDA developed the plan through working groups, made up of representatives from government agencies, large agribusinesses, and technology companies. Notably absent from these workgroups were any significant representatives of pet owners, recreational animal owners, and small farmers and ranchers. Much of the work of these workgroups has yet to be completed, yet industry is rushing to make this program mandatory and implemented nationwide, without regard to the price to be paid by consumers and the average animal owner.

On April 25, 2005, the USDA released "Draft Program Standards" ("Standards") and a "Draft Strategic Plan" ("Plan") for the NAIS. The Standards and Plan have no authority in law. The USDA has stated that the Animal Health Protection Act of 2002 is the source of its authority. (Plan at 9.) But that statute addresses only the import and export of animals, interstate travel, quarantines areas, and related programs. Two Congresses have tried, but failed to pass legislation that would amend the Act to provide for a mandatory electronic tracking system for individual head of livestock. **USDA is operating without authority from Congress.** Currently, there are three bills

in Congress, trying to give postdated authority to this assault on our freedom. The existence of these bills proves that there is no Congressional authority for USDA to establish a mandatory animal identification system.

USDA, various state agencies, and many private companies who have vested financial interests in seeing NAIS adopted have tried to present an image of the NAIS as a sensible, practical plan to address animal disease. A review of the government's plan, however, shows quite the opposite. The current NAIS Plan provides:

- Premises registration: **Every person** who owns even **one** horse, cow, pig, chicken, sheep, goat, deer, elk, bison, or virtually any livestock animal, will be forced to register their home, including owner's name, address, and telephone number, and keyed to Global Positioning System coordinates, in a government database under a 7-digit "premises ID number." (Standards, pp. 3-4, 10-12; Plan, p. 5.) Additionally, pet owners who own one parakeet, canary, cockatiel, etc. as owners of "exotic fowl" have been targeted for mandatory inclusion in this system. If you buy a pet bird after this system is put into effect, it probably will already have an Animal Identification Number. It will be registered to you, and you must register your premises (wherever you keep the bird). If you move the bird off your "premises" for any reason, or it dies, or it produces more birds, you must report such activity to the

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federal government within 24 hours. In Texas, there was a staff recommendation to hold off on mandatory registration of exotic fowl kept as pets, until a disease was suspected, then they will implement mandatory registration. However, that recommendation is on hold until TAHC decides what path it will take.

• **Animal Identification: Every animal** will have to be assigned a 15-digit ID number by the government. The form of ID will most likely be a tag or microchip containing a Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID), designed to be read from a distance. (Plan, p. 10; Standards, pp. 6, 12, 20, 27-28.) The plan may also include collecting the DNA of every animal and/or a retinal scan of every animal. (Plan, p.13.) Despite the announcement that a federal mandatory database might be put off, USDA maintains detailed information on the structure of these 15-digit ID numbers as of mid-March 2006, ostensibly so that ID manufacturers could normalize their numbering systems. Some animals such as pigs and poultry, owned by large producers, may have a "group" identifier assigned instead of an individual number for each animal, as described below.

• While some state agencies and industry actors have pointed to the provision for "group numbers" for poultry and swine, small farmers do not manage their animals in ways that would qualify. Group or lot identification can only be used where groups of animals are managed together from birth to death and never commingled with other animals. (Standards pp.5-6.) This provision is tailored for confinement poultry operations, not pastured poultry operations. If animals do not meet the requirements for group identification, they will have to be individually identified.

• **Animal Tracking:** The owner will be required to report: the birthdate of an animal, the application of every animal's ID tag, every time an animal leaves or enters the property, every time an animal loses a tag, every time a tag is replaced, the slaughter or death of an animal, or if any animal is missing. Also, every time an animal goes onto or off of another person's premises, a report would be required, showing that the tagged animal had been on each of these other premises. Such events must be reported within 24 hours. (Standards, pp. 12-13, 17-21.)

• Third parties, such as veterinarians, will be required to report "sightings" of animals who do not have ID numbers. (Standards, p. 25.) In other words, if a farmer or rancher calls a vet to their property to treat an animal, and the vet finds any animal without the mandatory 15-digit computer-readable ID, the vet may be required to report that non-compliance.

• There are no exceptions; under the USDA plan; livestock owners will be forced to register and report even if they raise animals only for their own food or keep horses for draft or for transportation.

• The USDA will exercise "enforcement" against livestock farmers who don't comply. (Standards, p. 7; Plan, p. 17.) As an example of what can be expected, the proposed Texas regulations for mandatory premises registration provide for fines of up to \$1,000 per day and criminal penalties.

THE ALLEGED RATIONALE: DISEASE CONTROL

The alleged rationale for this program is to protect against animal disease by providing 48-hour traceback of all animal movements. The proponents raise the specter of Mad Cow, foot and mouth, avian flu, and other "foreign animal diseases." There are many flaws with this rationale.

The first flaw is that the threat of disease cannot justify every intrusion into our privacy and property rights. Disease, both human and animal, has been part of our existence for millennia. The government's and industry's attempt to use fear to deprive us of our rights is unacceptable.

Second, even when viewed solely from the perspective of animal disease problems, the NAIS is unnecessary, ineffective, and even counterproductive. The government already has established systems and processes, including surveillance, tracking, and quarantines, for controlling the spread of animal diseases. In contrast to the established systems, this new program is impractical; the technology is flawed, the database would be unmanageable, and the logistics of actually tagging and tracking the animals would dwarf any government program in existence. The costs will roll downhill to the smallest producer and individual animal owner. There are no provisions for USDA to offset the staggering

THE DEWEESE REPORT

Vol. 13, No. 6 June 2007

Published by
American Policy Center

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ISSN 1086-7937
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Newsletter of the
American Policy Center

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Health Freedom Crisis (Cont'd from Pg.6)

Tell the FDA:

- The American PEOPLE do not want the FDA regulating their alternative health care options.
- You will NOT submit to Codex-type regulations.
- Their "thinking," as expressed in the Draft Guidance, is irrelevant. As a federal agency, their "thinking" should be to follow the will of Congress! OR, in other words,
- **BACK OFF!**

Your comments must reference "FDA Docket No. 2006D-0480", and must be submitted by May 29, 2007. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Philip L. Chao, Office of Policy and Planning (HF-23), Food and Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857, 301-827-0587.

2. It is urgent that you contact your own Congressman. You can write your Representative and Senator as:

NAIS... (Cont'd from Pg.3)

without government permission. We can take our shotguns and walk over our neighbor's property, but if children ride their ponies to their neighbors, or a farmer gives a couple chickens to a neighbor, that will have to be registered with the government.

• **Extreme Damage to Personal Privacy** - It is unprecedented for the United States government to conduct large-scale computer-aided surveillance of its citizens simply because they own a common type of property. (The only exceptions are registration of motor vehicles and, in some locales, guns.) A gun owner will be able to transport their gun almost anywhere they want to go, without reporting such movement to anyone. But, if you take a chicken to a livestock show, you will have to report it. The NAIS would actually subject the owner of a chicken to far more surveillance than the owner of a gun.

• **Insult to Animal Welfare** - The NAIS is the ultimate objectification of higher level living creatures, treating individual animals as if they were cans of peas with a bar code. Many people who raise their own animals, or buy from small local producers, do so because they are very troubled by industrial-scale production of chickens, cattle, sheep, and pigs. These people will be forced either to sacrifice their personal privacy to government surveillance,

or to stop raising their own food by humane standards.

• **Burden on Religious Freedom** - Many religious sects require their members to raise their own food animals and use animals in farming and transportation because their beliefs require them to live this way. Such people obviously cannot comply with the USDA's computerized, technology-dependent system. The NAIS will force these people to violate their religious beliefs.

• **Extraordinary Costs without Value** - The database will cost far more than it will deliver. The disease control claims are specious, as they ignore that disease control methods must be designed based on the species and disease involved, and the vectors of transmission. One system, even if it was useful for one species, will not fit all. The numbers of annual reports, and the size of the database, will dwarf any other database the federal government has. If it cannot track aliens with expired visas, how will it track 300,000,000 annual reports of movement or tagging of chickens? In other countries that have adopted mandatory premises and animal identification and tracking, costs have multiplied to twelve times the original fees per animal. Our economy cannot absorb these costs, when American citizens will reap no measurable benefit.

Office of Congressman (Name)
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Office of Senator (Name)
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

You may phone the United States Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121. A switchboard operator will connect you directly with the Senate or House office you request. Or, you can send an e-mail by going to each member's website at <http://www.thomas.gov>.

Tell them, **First**) you want your fundamental right to control your own health and health care protected; **Second**) you want the FDA reminded that their Draft Guidance violates the will of Congress, and the American people; and **Third**) it would be politically most unwise not to support and protect the health care choices of **most American voters**. Tell them you opposed Ted Kennedy's S.1082. 

• **A Technological Nightmare** - While the technology companies claim that they can deliver the technology called for under NAIS, this technology carries many problems and dangers of its own. RFID chips can be reprogrammed or even infected with viruses. Want to place the blame for a sick animal on someone else? Just reprogram the tag. Want to create chaos at a livestock auction? Infect the tags with viruses. Want to steal a horse? Simply destroy the microchip embedded in the horses' neck and insert a counterfeit one of your own.

STATE ISSUES

It is critical that everyone learn what is happening in their state. **NAIS is not a federal mandate**. The USDA has no statutory authority to implement NAIS. Each state is free to decide for itself whether or not to implement an animal identification system.

So find out if your state already has legislation or is implementing NAIS without legislation. If there is legislation, is the state agency working on regulations to implement it? If there isn't legislation, then how is it that your state is setting up its program? You, and your friends, have the capability to block and/or force the repeal of any laws. Tell your neighbors about this attack on our civil liberties.

For more information,
visit <http://www.libertyark.org> 

INSIDER'S REPORT

Health Freedom Crisis

FDA Fascists Want to ELIMINATE Your Health Freedom!

By Kathy Lehman / Editor - APC NewsWire

The Federal Drug Administration (FDA) has launched another sneak-attack, trying to regulate your health freedom into oblivion. Through FDA's unholy partnerships with Big Pharma and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (an offshoot of the UN), we are very close to losing alternative health care in America. This is a crisis, and needs your immediate action.

In 1994 Congress passed the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA), voting unanimously to protect your health care choices, in response to 2.5 million ordinary citizens demanding dietary supplements stay on the over-the-counter market.

The FDA is trying to end-run the DSHEA, and regulate you out from under Congress' severe limitations on the authority the FDA has over items currently classified as "food" (and therefore presumed to be safe) including dietary supplements and herbs. DSHEA currently provides the FDA with plenty of legal authority to remove any herb or supplement from the market anytime the agency can show REAL evidence of REAL harm to the public.

The Codex Alimentarius Commission is working to "harmonize" food and supplement rules, **pulling our American health care system down to the level of Third World nations**. Under Codex rules, even basic vitamins and minerals will require a doctor's prescription. As Europe moves ever closer to adopting Codex standards, it becomes more likely that the World Trade Organization will attempt to force those standards on the United States. This is yet another example of how the WTO threatens American sovereignty. By cooperating with Codex, the FDA is blatantly ignoring the will of Congress and the American people, hoping to overpower both through their fascistic "partnerships."

If the FDA adopts this proposal, all natural health care would be illegal even for medical doctors; all natural health care would be criminal in one way or another. Anyone else who advises, advocates, counsels, distributes, markets, recommends or suggests anybody use "medicine" is practicing medicine without a license. This is a felony in the USA punishable by fines and incarceration.

You can read FDA's proposed Draft Guidance for Industry on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Products and Their Regulation by the Food and Drug Administra-

tion document in html here: <http://www.fda.gov/OHRMS/DOCKETS/98fr/E7-3259.htm>.

This guidance document details PDA's plans to regulate virtually all herbs and supplements **as drugs if they actually benefit a medical condition of a man or other animal**. Believe it or not, the FDA has even targeted juice! If you plan to drink it "to promote optimal health", juice would be a "food subject to...the Act and FDA regulations." If you plan to drink juice "as part of a disease treatment regimen" juice would be "subject to regulation as a drug under the Act."

You would no longer dare recommend anyone drink cranberry juice to help with a bladder infection. And please remember, **water cures dehydration!**

Follow the Money!

The FDA wants to put your wallet, and your throat, within reach of Big Pharma's greedy, fat fingers. According to the National Institutes of Health (http://nccam.nih.gov/news/camsurvey_fs1.htm), over 1/3 of all American adults use some form of alternative therapy, spending tens of billions of out-of-pocket (read, not refunded by insurance) dollars annually. Americans now spend more on "Complimentary and Alternative Modalities" than they do on standard (allopathic) healthcare professionals. Consumers know that readily available vitamins, minerals, herbs, and supplements are often just as effective (**if not more so**) as the drugs **without** the harmful side effects.

Moreover, Senator Ted Kennedy has introduced S.1082 which will also adversely affect your ability to buy natural supplements. It must be stopped.

If you value your health freedom you have only very little time to raise your voice. If you wait for someone else to protect your health freedom, you risk losing the freedom you now enjoy - freedom that is the envy of the world.

ACTION TO TAKE:

I assert my fundamental right to control my own health and health care. I want Complementary and Alternative Modalities ("CAM") to be freely available.

1. Submit comments on the draft guidance to the Division of Dockets Management (HFA-305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852.

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costs of this national program.

Moreover, the tracking of animal disease 48 hours later does little to address either the prevention of diseases or the safety of our food supply. If we want to protect Americans from Mad Cow disease, for example, the answer is simple: stop feeding animal parts to cattle and test animals that are slaughtered before they enter the food chain. The problems of salmonella and e. coli in our food supply can also be best addressed by prevention and proper inspection of slaughterhouses. Tracking will not solve these problems.

The idea that a one-size-fits-all tracking program could address the issue of animal disease shows a complete lack of understanding of biology and animal management. As is well documented in the scientific literature, the susceptibility of animals to disease and the likelihood of transmission differ greatly depending on the conditions under which the animals are kept. Yet the NAIS makes no distinction between farmers raising a small herd of sheep and cattle on carefully-tended pastures, and a feedlot with hundreds of animals crowded into small pens, hock-deep in manure; there is no distinction between a pastured poultry operation where the birds are moved daily and sunlight kills any pathogens and confinement operations with 10,000 chickens living in an unsanitary, crowded building. This program is precisely the **opposite** of what is needed to prevent and control disease.

Indeed, NAIS will probably increase the spread of livestock diseases by creating a new black market. If these new regulations are adopted, it is inevitable that some people will not comply - whether for religious reasons, economic reasons, or unwillingness to allow the government intrusion. Since they will be acting illegally, they will be far less likely to seek a veterinarian's help should a disease problem arise.

THE SECONDARY ALLEGED RATIONALE:

THE EXPORT MARKET

The USDA has stated that NAIS

is also necessary to protect the U.S.'s export market. Yet a voluntary program would suffice to address exports. Such a program would allow the market to determine how valuable it is to track animals from birth to death. Any farmer that wishes to export animals or food to other countries could enroll in the program; in turn, these exporters could refuse to buy from anyone who was not also enrolled in the tracking program. There is no reason to impose the heavy burdens of NAIS on the thousands of farmers, ranchers, homesteaders, and companion animal owners who have no interest in being part of the commercial chain.

THE REAL REASONS

Given that the stated reasons for NAIS are insupportable, one has to look for the true reasons for this program. In searching for the truth, it is helpful to look at who is advocating the program.

First, the large industrial agriculture entities, such as Cargill Pork and Tyson, support this program. These entities will reap all of the benefits from the enhanced export market, without bearing the costs that will be imposed on the people actually raising the animals and/or taxpayers. Moreover, by creating such a burdensome program, the industrial agriculture can rid itself of the small, but rapidly-growing, local foods movement that threatens its monopoly and its ability to complete the vertical integration of our food supply.

Second, various technology companies also stand to profit from this program. Global Vet Link, Micro Beef Technologies, and Digital Angel are all members of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture and involved in the working groups developing the details of the plans. Such companies not only make the microchips and radiotags, but charge for software and related equipment necessary to operate these systems.

Third, the large associations support this program, even though most of their members are opposed. While this is puzzling at first, it is yet again an issue

of following the money. The USDA has stated that the database with all of the NAIS information will be privately-held, to avoid Freedom of Information Act issues. There has been repeated discussion that NAIS will actually consist of multiple databases. Many large livestock and companion animal breed associations already operate significant databases with information on livestock animal owners, and are perfectly positioned to become contractors and subcontractors for the NAIS database. The government will mandate registration and reporting, and the private organizations will be able to charge as they like, because their "customers" are captives of NAIS.

THE REAL EFFECTS

So if NAIS will not solve animal disease problems, what will it do?

- **Eradication of Small Farms** - People with just a few meat animals or 40-cow dairies are already living on the edge financially. The USDA plan will force many of them to give up farming.

- **Loss of the True Security of Organic and Local Foods** - The NAIS is touted by the USDA and agricorporations as a way to make our food supply "secure" against diseases or terrorism. However, most people instinctively understand that real food security comes from raising food yourself or buying from a local farmer you actually know. The USDA plan will only kill off more local sources of production, which are our best defense in the event of adulteration of the food supply by terrorists. These small producers also represent the community of organic and sustainable agriculture farmers and ranchers, which provide food sources in increasing demand.

- **Destruction of Personal Property Rights as We Know Them** - Legally, livestock animals are a form of personal property. The NAIS plan refers to a "national herd" (Plan p.8) which clearly indicates the government's vision: private ownership rights will be destroyed, and no one will be allowed to birth, hatch, own, or transfer any head of livestock

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ABSOLUTES.....!

Opposition to National ID Continues to Grow*By Tom DeWeese*

Five states, Idaho, Washington, Montana, Arkansas and Maine, have enacted legislation informing the federal government that their states will not comply with the Real ID Act, a law passed by Congress in 2005 which will essentially transform driver's licenses into a national ID Card.

The Act requires each state to change their driver's license system to meet national standards and ensure that their databases are linked with other states and is set to take effect by May, 2008.

Under the Act, states and federal government would share access to a vast national database that could include images of birth certificates, marriage licenses, divorce papers, court ordered separations, medical records, and detailed information on the name, date of birth, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, address, telephone, e-mail address, and Social Security Number for more than 240 million with no requirements or controls on how this database might be used. Many Americans may not have the documents required to obtain a REAL ID, or they may face added requirements based on arbitrary and capricious decisions made by DMV employees.

States are in revolt primarily because they simply cannot afford to comply. Estimated costs for full implementation are as high as \$14.6 billion (or \$292 million per state). Moreover, individuals will have to cover an additional \$7.8 billion in additional fees, raising the price tag for the Real ID Act to \$23 billion. In many cases the technology necessary for compliance actually does not exist. Moreover, in March, 2007, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released 162 pages of proposed regulations which States are supposed to implement as part of the Real ID Act.

Under the DHS dictates, the Real ID Act is nothing more than a federal take over of state Department of Motor Vehicles (DMVs). Everything from the color of the card backgrounds to the fonts used must conform to federal standards. States will have to completely overhaul their systems to comply.

The DHS requires states to set up information databases that are shared by all states, to allow information verification for driver's licenses, passports and foreign documents, yet the technology to do that doesn't yet exist.

There isn't even a national database system yet in place to verify birth certificates.

The DHS regulations do nothing to protect individual privacy in its proposed data bases. It conveniently says it "would be outside its authority to address this issue (privacy)." It simply leaves the issue for states to work out.

The DHS regulations require that every citizen applying for a driver's license must present two verifiable documents to prove identity. That requirement alone will create massive lines and backups in DMVs across the nation as every single American will have to provide such information. Worse, the same documentation will be required for RENEWAL as well. Some estimate the time required to get a new driver's license will be at least four months. Proof of address must be shown with not just one document, but two. Birth certificates must be verified with state vital records offices, even though, as stated, there is no database from which to access such information.

And the new system will do absolutely nothing to stop terrorists or illegals from acquiring driver's licenses, nor will it protect us from identity theft. Because the DHS acknowledges that it needs an exemption allowing individuals to bypass many of the states' verification and document requirements, identity thieves and terrorists will have huge loopholes to exploit to obtain Real IDs.

These are the reasons why the five states mentioned above have passed legislation refusing to comply. They simply can't.

In addition to those five states, thirteen more states have passed legislation in one chamber of their legislatures to refuse compliance, including; Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Oklahoma, Missouri, Minnesota, Georgia, South Carolina, West Virginia, Vermont and New Hampshire.

Nine states have introduced legislation that is still waiting action including; Oregon, Texas, Nebraska, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Massachusetts.

The federal government overstepped its Constitutional bounds when it tried to force the creation of a National ID on Americans. Now the states are what they should always have faced with that situation – they are saying no. Hopefully that will become a habit. 

...THESE THINGS REALLY ARE HAPPENING!

Progress in the Fight to Stop the NAU and NAFTA Highway*By Tom DeWeese*

A tiny but determined band of organizations and individuals are standing up to Goliath and are beginning to see his knees wobble.

Goliath is the globalist-inspired Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) – better known as the North American Union (NAU) and the Trans Texas Corridor (TCC) – also known as the NAFTA Highway.

To date a dozen states have introduced resolutions to oppose the SPP and the NAU. Some states have also included language to oppose creation of a new currency called the Amero. Also opposed in most of the resolutions is the super highway (TCC) to run from Laredo, Texas all the way to Kansas City and more. Specifically, all of the resolutions are reacting to a wide range of concepts and structures dealing with the integration of North America into one "harmonized" union.

The states where resolutions have been introduced include Arizona, Georgia, Illinois, Missouri, Montana, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia and Washington.

The TCC itself has come under specific attack. First, in April, 2007 a group of trucking and environmental organizations, led by the Teamsters Union, filed a law suit against an announced Bush Administration pilot project that would authorize up to 100 Mexican-based trucking companies to travel beyond U.S. Border States. The suit demands that the American public be given an opportunity to comment on the policy before it is implemented. It is widely understood that the pilot program is a necessary first step in the creation of the NAFTA Highway, which will allow traffic across the border to move without stopping for inspection.

In filing the suit, Teamster president Jim Hoffa said the Bush Administration "is ignoring the American people in its zeal to open our borders to unsafe Mexican trucks."

Meanwhile, in Texas, at the center of the storm, the state legislature passed legislation to impose a 2-year moratorium for the highway. This will slow down the process and give the opposition a chance to organize and stop the highway completely.

The state has already signed a 50 year lease with a private

Spanish company named Cintra. That lease not only allows the company to make huge profits from the tolls to be collected, but also includes a no-complete clause that prevents the state from building new government roads or improving existing highways that travel in the same direction as the TCC. This fact prompted one Texas official to call the rush to impose public/private partnerships a "rush to sell the crown jewels of Texas."

The Texas House passed the moratorium legislation on April 11 by a vote of 137 – 2. Now the Senate has passed it with one 4 votes in opposition. This is an incredible result considering that just months before most Texas legislators claimed the Corridor was just a highway improvement bill. It is even more impressive when considering that the Texas Governor tried to team up with the Federal Department of Transportation to threaten the Texas legislators that federal highway funds would be "in jeopardy" if the moratorium passed. The action simply served to anger legislators who then voted for the moratorium with a vengeance.

The Security and Prosperity Partnership is a threat to our national sovereignty and independence. The United States, with its Constitution which protects individual liberty from government, is the most unique on earth and cannot be "harmonized" with nations which do not share our values.

These victories against the effort to create a North American Union are exciting and important. However, the fight is far from over. The forces driving the SPP and the TCC are rich, powerful and determined. Opponents must continue to pour on the attack and we must score again and again to have any hope in stopping the SPP.

Two actions are necessary to stop the SPP threat. The first is to stop the Trans Texas Corridor. The second is to impose strong immigration policy that stops the flood of illegals across our border. Texas has taken steps to provide the first. Now every American must flood Congress with calls and letters to demand the second. Meanwhile, we must also encourage every state legislature to pass resolutions against the whole concept of a North American Union.

But it's not a bad bit of work for a tiny band of dedicated activists which have no national media voice, no massive funding and little support among political leaders. All we have is some truth and a lot of heart. It works. 