

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

[Home](#) [About Us](#) [Hearings & Markups](#) [Latest News](#) [Issues & Views](#)

Press Releases

House Judiciary Committee Introduces Bill to Expand E-Verify

For Immediate Release
 April 26, 2013

Contact: Kathryn Rexrode or Jessica Collins (Goodlatte), (202) 225-3951
 Kim Smith Hicks (Smith), 202-225-4236

House Judiciary Committee Introduces Bill to Expand E-Verify

Washington, D.C. – House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) today joined Congressman Lamar Smith (R-Texas) in introducing the *Legal Workforce Act* (H.R. 1772) a bipartisan bill that will discourage illegal immigration by ensuring jobs are only made available to those authorized to work in the U.S. The *Legal Workforce Act* is one of several bills the House Judiciary Committee plans to introduce to help address various issues within our immigration system.

E-Verify, created in 1996 and operated by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, is a web-based program that checks the Social Security numbers or Alien Identification numbers of new hires against Social Security Administration and Department of Homeland Security records in order to eliminate fraudulent numbers and helps ensure that new hires are genuinely eligible to work in the U.S. The program quickly confirms 99.7% of work-eligible employees and takes less than two minutes to use. Today, nearly 450,000 American employers voluntarily use E-Verify. Outside evaluations have found that the vast majority of employers using E-Verify believe it to be an effective and reliable tool for checking the legal status of their employees. Below are statements from Chairman Goodlatte and Rep. Smith on the bill's introduction.

Chairman Goodlatte: "The future of immigration reform hinges on ensuring the American people that our immigration laws are enforced. In the past, politicians promised us tougher enforcement in exchange for the legalization of those unlawfully in the U.S., but these promises were never kept and today we are left with a broken immigration system.

"One way to make sure we discourage illegal immigration in the future is to expand the use of E-Verify across the country. This web-based program is a reliable and fast way for employers to check the work eligibility of newly hired employees. The *Legal Workforce Act* builds on E-Verify's success and makes a promise to the American people that it can deliver. By expanding E-Verify, it will be much more difficult for people to work illegally in the U.S. and will consequently help stop illegal immigration.

"It is also important to create enforcement laws that are actually enforced. *The Legal Workforce Act* empowers states to help enforce the law, ensuring that we don't continue to make the enforcement mistakes of the past where the President can 'turn-off' federal enforcement efforts unilaterally."

Congressman Smith: "Twenty-two million Americans are still struggling to find full-time employment. Meanwhile, seven million people work in the U.S. illegally. These jobs should go to legal workers.

"Illegal workers compete with American workers for jobs and drive down their wages. The nationwide use of E-Verify could increase wages and open up millions of jobs for unemployed and underemployed Americans. E-Verify will help ensure that jobs are

reserved for citizens and legal workers.

"E-Verify is easy to use and has proved effective at helping employers avoid illegal workers. It takes just a few minutes and immediately confirms 99.7% percent of work-eligible employees."

Original cosponsors of the *Legal Workforce Act* include Reps. Goodlatte (R-Va.), Gowdy (R-S.C.), Bishop (R-Utah), Blackburn (R-Tenn.), Burgess (R-Texas), Calvert (R-Calif.), Chaffetz (R-Utah), DeFazio (D-Oreg.), Farenthold (R-Texas), Forbes (R-Va.), Franks (R-Ariz.), Holding (R-N.C.), King (R-N.Y.), Labrador (R-Idaho), Lance (R-N.J.), Poe (R-Texas), Royce (R-Calif.), Schweikert (R-Ariz.), Sensenbrenner (R-Wisc.), Stivers (R-Ohio), and Westmoreland (R-Ga.).

Key Components of the Legal Workforce Act:

Repeals I-9 System: Repeals the current paper-based I-9 system and replaces it with a completely electronic work eligibility check, bringing the process into the 21st century.

AILA InfoNet Doc. No. 13050808. (Posted 5/08/13)

Gradual Phase-In: Phases-in mandatory E-Verify participation for new hires in six month increments beginning on the date of enactment. Within six months of enactment, businesses having more than 10,000 employees are required to use E-Verify. Within 12 months of enactment, businesses having 500 to 9,999 employees are required to use E-Verify. Eighteen months after enactment, businesses having 20 to 499 employees must use E-Verify. And 24 months after enactment, businesses having 1 to 19 employees must use E-Verify.

Agriculture: Requires that employees performing “agricultural labor or services” are only subject to an E-Verify check within 24 months of the date of enactment.

States as Partners: Preempts duplicative state laws mandating E-Verify use but retains the ability of states and localities to condition business licenses on the requirement that the employer use E-Verify in good faith under the federal law. In addition, the bill allows states to enforce the federal E-Verify requirement and incentivizes them to do so by letting them keep the fines they recover from employers who violate the law.

Protects Against Identity Theft: The bill allows individuals to lock their Social Security number (SSN) so that it can't be used by another person to get a job. It also allows parents or legal guardians to lock the SSN of their minor child. And if a SSN shows unusual multiple use, the Department of Homeland Security is required to lock the SSN and alert the owner that their personal information may have been compromised.

Safe Harbor: Grants employers a safe harbor from prosecution if they use the E-Verify program in good faith, and through no fault of theirs, receive an incorrect eligibility confirmation.

A copy of the legislation can be found [here](#).



[LATEST NEWS](#) | [SCHEDULE](#) | [ABOUT THE COMMITTEE](#) | [CONTACT](#) | [ISSUES & VIEWS](#) | [SEARCH](#) | [MINORITY WEB SITE](#)

US House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 p\202.225.3951