



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

## Larkin Comments On Governor's Plan To Give Illegal Immigrants N.y.s. Driver's Licenses

[WILLIAM J. LARKIN JR.](#) October 29, 2007

As a retired Lt. Col. in the United States Army and as a member of the New York State Standing Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs, I strongly oppose the plan by Governor Spitzer to grant New York State driver's licenses to illegal aliens.

The driver's license is the basic identification document for nearly everyone in America.

There are 8 to 11 million illegals in the US. Even their advocates call them "undocumented." Remember, an "undocumented" (illegal) alien is a person whose true identity is unknown.

Thus, a state that grants a driver's license to an "undocumented" alien is giving an official "valid ID" to a person who may not be just someone who is trying to make a better life for himself here. Illegals are people who break the law to get into the US and break the law to stay here. To give illegals the privilege of driving in New York is not only rewarding criminal activity, it is putting the rest of the law abiding public at risk. We would also be foolish to ignore the fact that giving licenses to illegals will encourage even more illegals to come to New York State.

I think we should listen to the 9/11 Families for a Secure America who are asking the few other states that give drivers' licenses to illegals to alter their statutes so as to prohibit people who are not legally present in this country from getting licenses. Why is it necessary to keep illegal aliens from getting drivers' licenses? Because a driver's license is a terrorist's tool.

Nearly every one of the 9/11 terrorists was allowed to board the planes that they used to commit mass murder because he had a driver's license, a "valid ID," from Virginia or Florida. When the terrorists needed places to claim as a residence, they used their licenses as "ID" for signing their leases. When they opened the bank accounts that they used to place the financing for the conspiracy, they used their licenses as ID. When they rented cars, rented motel rooms, when they paid tuition for their flying lessons they used their licenses to "identify" themselves.

Drivers' licenses did more for the terrorists besides allowing them to board the planes. Drivers' licenses were the tools that allowed them to blend in as just ordinary Americans.

The few states that have given licenses to illegals and terrorists in the past are enacting laws to ban this practice. Florida stopped issuing to illegals in 2002. Kentucky enacted a ban in 2002. Virginia enacted a ban in March 2003 (The bill passed 82 to 16 in the House, 32 to 8 in the Senate).

Bills to ban licenses for illegals and terrorists are now pending in the Tennessee and North Carolina legislatures. In addition, a bill to prohibit acceptance of identification cards issued by foreign consulates in the US to illegal aliens recently passed the Tennessee House 93 to zero.

In California, supporters of giving licenses to terrorists have tried in each of the last two years to change the law to permit this practice, but both attempts have been killed.

In New York, special interests have tried to change the law to allow illegals to get licenses but the attempts have essentially been laughed out of the Legislature.

Maryland is the only state since 9/11 to make its licenses available to illegal immigrants.

I wonder if the Governor surveyed the families of the 3,000 murdered on September 11th if he would still believe this is a good plan. I believe we should listen to the families who as a united group have publicly stated that it is time that all states move to join the overwhelming majority of the states by enacting bills to ban issuance of drivers' licenses to illegal aliens and other lawbreakers.

To me, this looks like a desperate gambit by the Governor to pander to the illegal alien lobby. It is also a poor attempt to try to convince the public that all distinctions between legal and illegal residents should be erased. I don't believe the majority of New Yorkers will buy this idea. In fact, I think the opposite is true. This country and state have spent billions to improve the security of all Americans and to identify those who might wish to harm us. This plan by Governor Spitzer will only serve to undo all the progress we have made over the last six years to create a safer New York and a safer nation.