U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on the Judiciary

Testimony of Glenda Wooten-Ingram
Committee on Judiciary
Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugee, Border Security, and
International Law

Hearing on Electronic Employment Verification Systems: Needed Safeguards
to Protect Privacy and Prevent Misuse

June 10, 2008

Dear Distinguished Members of Congress – I am Glenda Ingram

Director of Human Resources for the Embassy Suites Convention

Center. Thank you for this opportunity to come before you today

to speak of my experiences with the E-Verify program. As a Hotel

Director of Human Resources in the Washington, DC area for

more than twenty years with the last four years at the Embassy

Suites Convention Center I have seen the benefits and the need for

this program.

Since the late 1990's I have been working with E-Verify, then a

pilot program, it is very easy to use and relieves many Human

Resources Departments and Companies of the burden of proving a

potential new hire's eligibility to work in the United States.

In fact, during the interview process we can not ask for

proof of eligibility to work in the United States. Using E-Verify

helps the employer to verify that a new hire's documents are in

order and keeps the employer in compliance with the laws.

E-Verify provides documents to the employer to be used when an

employer receives a non-confirmation notice regarding a new hire.

The new hires document is stored in the system ready for the

employer to print and present to the Social Security Administration

and Department of Homeland Security upon request. We review

this document with the new hire for them to make a decision to

contest or not to contest the validity of the information.

In August 2005 when we were opening the Embassy Suites we hired 175 new employees using the E-Verify program. During the hiring process we posted notice and verbally told each potential new hire that we utilized the E-Verify program. I firmly believe that this helped us to eliminate hiring applicants who did not have the legal paperwork required to work for the hotel.

Currently this notice is posted in the Human Resources Department for all employees and applicants to read and ask questions. This deteriorates applicants from applying for positions knowing their paperwork is not legal. Using this procedure has saved our company a lot of money in time verifying information on the application, verifying past employment (which can sometimes take days), on drug tests, training and when found out, re-advertising the position.

Illegal paperwork is usually not found out until after they have been hired and completed the I-9 form. The E-Verify process takes less than 5 minutes to input and receive a confirmation or non-confirmation. If a non-confirmation is returned we bring the new employee into the private office, inform them of the results, explain the procedures, give them the opportunity to contact the authorities and rectify the paperwork. We ensure them that they are not being terminated and they can continue to work while working on the solution.

Once they return with the proper paperwork, we re-enter it into the system and in most cases they are confirmed. Many of the problems we encounter are data entry errors such as misspelled names, incorrect date of birth or social security numbers.

This system does not discriminate against anyone since every new

hire must provide proof they can work in the United States, complete an I-9 form and entered into E-Verifying.

In closing, I believe that in my 10 or more years of using E-Verify that it is an invaluable business tool; the cost is free; is easy to teach (including President Bush); is very user friendly and the support system is very helpful.

Beyond the most obvious reasons mentioned above I firmly believe that E-Verify has prevented us from hiring illegal's and staying in compliance with the law. This is a program all Companies should use.

Thank you for your time and this opportunity.