



## **Department of Homeland Security and the State of Arizona Team up to Advance Secure ID Initiatives**

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The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the state of Arizona agreed to partner on efforts that will potentially enhance the security of the state driver's license to meet Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) requirements, provide Arizona employers with a secure document that can be used in validating a person's legal status and align to satisfy future requirements of REAL ID.

The Arizona project, much like the agreement reached with the states of Washington and Vermont earlier this year will serve as another alternative available to U.S. citizens to satisfy WHTI requirements. DHS announced in June that U.S. and Canadian citizens will need to present either a WHTI compliant document or government-issued photo ID and proof of citizenship, such as a driver's license and birth certificate, beginning on January 31, 2008, for admissibility into the U.S. The department intends to end the routine practice of accepting oral declarations alone at land and sea ports of entry, and also proposes to begin alternative procedures for U.S. and Canadian children at that time.

The Arizona project will require legislative approval, which Governor Napolitano has committed to seek.

"I applaud the leadership of the state of Arizona who came forward to join us in our effort to bolster security through secure identification," said Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff. "This partnership helps us strike the right balance between security and facilitation, incorporating 21st century technology and innovation."

Governor Janet Napolitano added, "Arizona has been a leader among the states on issues related to border security and immigration. My hope is that this project will lead to an effective permanent program that can be implemented nationwide."

The state of Arizona will develop a technologically enhanced driver's license that will provide its residents, who voluntarily apply and qualify, with a document that is acceptable for use at U.S. land and sea ports. The enhanced driver's license will be slightly more expensive than a standard Arizona state driver's license and will require proof of citizenship, identity, and residence.

In addition, the bearer will be able to use a newly-issued Arizona card in the work eligibility process.

Finally, the REAL ID requirements - slated to be issued later this year - are intended to strengthen the underlying document through physical security features and a secure issuance process. Arizona's new driver's license is poised to be one of the nation's first to comply with REAL ID requirements.

The 9/11 Commission endorsed secure documentation for determining admissibility into the country, and Congress mandated WHTI implementation in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004. At present, U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel consider more than 8,000 distinct state issued birth certificates, driver's licenses or other forms of identification when making decisions on who and what to admit into the country.

The Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of State, will at a date to be determined implement the full requirements of the land and sea phase of WHTI. DHS and the Department of State expect the date of full WHTI implementation to be in the summer of 2008. The precise implementation date will be formally announced with at least 60 days notice.

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