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## Why terrorists won't mind a national ID card—but why you should hate it

Ordinary Americans will be inconvenienced. Terrorists will simply forge it.

WASHINGTON, DC — Politicians who want to force everyone to carry a national ID card — and the misguided Americans who agree with them — are making a mistake that they will regret long after the terrorist threat subsides, Libertarians say.

“Even in a time of turmoil, here are three words that no American should ever hear: *Your papers, please!*” said Steve Dasbach, Libertarian Party national director. “Our victory over terrorism will be cheapened if we make America less of a free country.”

Over the past several weeks, a number of House and Senate lawmakers have hinted that they are open to the idea of a mandatory national ID card, perhaps with “biometric identifiers” like a fingerprint.

**Polls show that a significant number of Americans agree: A September 19 Pew Research Center poll found that 70% of Americans favored a requirement that citizens carry a national ID card at all times.**

“Although these poll numbers are probably inflated because of the September 11 attacks, it does appear that many Americans equate bigger government with more safety,” said Dasbach. “But there’s considerable evidence that a national ID card would do nothing to combat terrorism, while giving the government extraordinary new power.”

Why? Because a mandatory national ID card won’t work, said Dasbach.

“Of the 19 hijackers in the September 11 attacks, all but two were in the country legally,” he said. “So they could have shown a *valid* national ID card before boarding — and then proceeded to commandeer four planes and slaughter 5,000 innocent people,” he said.

**“And terrorists who come into the country illegally will be able to get national ID cards as well — either by forging documents or bribing a public official.**

“As a recent *USA Today* article on ‘Do-It-Yourself’ forgery found, teenagers using new digital technology make fake IDs that are good enough to ‘astonish authorities’ and even fool police officers. Does any sensible American believe that a terrorist organization with a \$200 million budget, such as bin Laden’s, can send dozens of people to flight school, hijack four jetliners simultaneously, and terrorize a nation — yet be unable to create fake IDs?

“In the end, the *only* people who will be inconvenienced by such cards are law-abiding Americans. You won’t be able to board a plane, write a check, or even enter a movie theater if you forget your ID card — while terrorists will blithely circumvent that law, just as they do every other law.”