

## **Once Again, Congress Pursues Costly E-Verify Legislation to the Peril of U.S. Economy**

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**Washington D.C.** - On Wednesday, the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration Policy and Enforcement will hold a hearing on the “Legal Workforce Act,” another enforcement-only bill introduced today by Judiciary Chairman Lamar Smith (R-TX). The bill would make the electronic employment verification system “E-Verify” mandatory for all employers within two years (three for agriculture). Much like the other hearings conducted by the Subcommittee this year, Wednesday’s hearing is likely to promote tougher enforcement and more deportations as the solution to immigration reform, rather than offer a thoughtful analysis of what must be done to create an effective immigration system that stimulates our economy and supports workers and businesses.

E-Verify is a web-based technology that allows employers to check federal databases to determine whether their employees—U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, and other foreign-born workers—are authorized to work in the U.S. While USCIS has made significant improvements in E-Verify, many problems still exist. An [independent evaluation](#) [1] found that E-Verify is unable to identify unauthorized workers in half of the cases. At a time when the U.S. needs to stimulate its economy and create jobs, mandatory E-Verify will impose additional regulations and costs on businesses, and employers will have to fire U.S. citizens who are erroneously identified as unauthorized to work.

Rather than looking for ways to stimulate the economy, proponents of mandatory E-Verify will shrink federal and state economies by driving workers who contribute through their tax contributions and purchasing power further underground. Mandatory E-Verify will not resolve the problem of illegal immigration; it will only exacerbate the problems we have created by failing to deal with immigration systematically and comprehensively.

Congress must devote itself to creating a functioning legal immigration system for the 21<sup>st</sup> century—one that offers enough visas to accommodate the demand for workers, unifies American families, and addresses the underground economy of people who have put down roots in the U.S. Ensuring that only authorized persons are working in the United States is an important piece of reforming the broken immigration system. On its own, however, mandatory E-Verify is simply this year’s immigration silver bullet—another effort to spend money and look tough without actually fixing anything.

**For more info on E-Verify, see the following IPC fact sheets:**

- [Mandatory E-Verify without Legalization Would Hamper Economic Recovery and Cost U.S. Workers Jobs](#) [2] (IPC, Fact Check, February 10, 2011)
- [E-Verify and the Social Security Administration: A Rocky Road Ahead for U.S. Seniors](#) [3] (IPC Fact Check, April 15, 2011)

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[2]

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