



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0416-2010, **Version:** *

Res. No. 416

Resolution calling on Congress and President Obama to abandon the proposal for a national biometric social security card as part of a comprehensive immigration reform package.

By Council Members Mark-Viverito, Dromm, James, Lander, Palma and Mendez

Whereas, An estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants live in the United States, most of whom came to the United States in search of a better life for themselves and their families; and

Whereas, New York City is home to the second largest immigrant population in the nation, many of whom are likely undocumented; and

Whereas, The current immigration system makes it difficult for undocumented immigrants to work, pursue higher education and to adjust their status to become lawful residents in the United States; and

Whereas, In order to resolve these issues, President Barack Obama promised to make comprehensive immigration reform a top priority during his first year as President; and

Whereas, On July 1, 2010, President Obama made his first speech dedicated solely to immigration, in which he reiterated his commitment to comprehensive immigration reform and stated that in order to repair the broken immigration system a bi-partisan bill needs to be introduced in Congress; and

Whereas, During his speech, President Obama expressed support for the Real Enforcement with Practical Answers for Immigration Reform (REPAIR) Proposal unveiled by Senators Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) on March 18, 2010; and

Whereas, In order to control the hiring, recruitment and employment of undocumented immigrant workers, the REPAIR Proposal would establish a biometric social security card that would serve as evidence of lawful work authorization and would allow employers to quickly and accurately determine who is allowed to

work in the United States; and

Whereas, Because the biometric social security card would be used for employment verification purposes, the entire nation's workforce, of more than 150 million people, would be required to carry a biometric social security card and businesses would be required to obtain the appropriate technology to read each card; and

Whereas, Some fear that a biometric social security card would result in people being wrongfully denied work because employers would be relying on an automated system that could make mistakes; for example, an error rate of just 1% could result in more than 1.5 million people being wrongly deemed ineligible for work; and

Whereas, Once the biometric social security card system is established, some believe that the government would be unable to resist the urge to use the card as a central identity document that would be used as a general form of identification and for purposes other than determining employment eligibility; and

Whereas, Many fear that a biometric social security card would be required to be shown as proof of citizenship or lawful immigration status; and

Whereas, A coalition of privacy and civil liberties groups have asked key lawmakers and President Obama to reject the idea of a biometric social security card as part of a comprehensive immigration reform package; and

Whereas, In his July 1, 2010, speech, President Obama stated that the task for lawmakers concerning comprehensive immigration reform is "...to make our national laws work - to shape a system that reflects our values as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants;" and

Whereas, Some fear that a biometric social security card will lead to a national identification card system and increased surveillance, something that Americans have always been against; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the Council of the City of New York calls on Congress and President Obama to abandon the proposal for a national biometric social security card as part of a comprehensive immigration reform

package.

JEB
LS #1205
7/21/10