

ACLU Says Gutierrez-Flake Immigration Bill Falls Short, Proposal Sensitive to Due Process, But Undermines Privacy (3/23/2007)

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WASHINGTON - The American Civil Liberties Union today said that a bipartisan immigration reform bill, introduced by Representatives Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) and Jeff Flake (R-AZ), while a welcome first step, falls short from a civil liberties perspective. Although the Security Through Regularized Immigration and a Vibrant Economy (STRIVE) Act of 2007 does not include the many due process deprivations that have plagued other so-called immigration "reform" legislation, it would violate privacy through the creation of a de facto national identification card.

The following can be attributed to Caroline Fredrickson, Director of the ACLU Washington Legislative Office:

"Drafting comprehensive immigration reform is no easy task, and for the most part, the Gutierrez-Flake bill takes steps that are sensitive to Constitutional principles. Misguided measures like additional mandatory detention measures have been excluded, and the bill takes a tempered approach on the issue of indefinite detention. The bill also recognizes the importance of providing judicial review in the immigration process and takes a step in the right direction.

"Sadly, Title III of the bill attacks privacy by creating a national ID card. Creating a national ID card under the guise of a 'secured' Social Security card is not only financially and logistically daunting, it creates the possibility that we will become a society where 'your papers' will need to be presented at every turn. We urge Congress to strike this provision and build upon the hard work of Congressmen Gutierrez and Flake to keep constitutional problems out of this legislation."