



# Minnesota House Passes Real ID But Ponders Undocumented Immigrants

The National Real ID card is pushed by DHS but must be passed in individual states. Minnesota is the latest state to pass the legislation, but still cannot figure out what to do with illegal immigrants. □ TN Editor Minnesotans — and many of the lawmakers who represent them — generally want the state to make its driver's licenses valid for airplane travel and other federal purposes before next year.

But, like last year, the way the Legislature wants to adopt the federal Real ID license standards is causing some controversy.

A House measure to change Minnesota licenses so they will be accepted by the federal government by the 2018 deadline won a narrow 12-11 vote in a House committee Wednesday.

Some object to the federal government making requirements on state-issued licenses. Others object to the specific way the bill is written.

If the House bill becomes law, it would create two tracks for new Minnesota driver's licenses. One would meet all the federal standards and could be used for any federal purpose. The other, called a noncompliant license, would not.

Issuing the noncompliant license would allow Minnesotans who chose to do so to opt out of the extra security measures needed for the federally approved Real ID license.

But the bill, opponents say, would also make it impossible for undocumented immigrants to get those noncompliant driver's licenses without further legislative action.

"Putting that language in there creates gridlock," said Rep. Connie Bernardy, DFL-New Brighton. In 2016, the issue of immigrant driver's licenses was among the disputes that felled a Real ID solution.

Rep. Dennis Smith, a Maple Grove Republican and the chief sponsor of the Real ID measure, says that the bill shouldn't be controversial. If the state is going to make a "complex immigration decision" regarding its driver's licenses, the Legislature should be involved, he said.

[Read full story here...](#)