



MALDEF

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

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March 16, 2005
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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RE: MALDEF Urges the Senate to Vote Against REAL ID

Dear Senator:

Atlanta
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MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund) is a national, non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to protecting the civil rights of the nation's 40 million Latinos in the United States through community education, advocacy, and litigation. MALDEF employs these strategies through five programmatic areas, including immigrants' rights.

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After engaging in a careful and critical analysis of the *REAL ID Act* (H.R. 418), MALDEF opposes the four main provisions of this proposed legislation. In addition, we understand that today, *REAL ID* was attached to the appropriations legislation needed to support our troops in Iraq, H.R. 1268 - *Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Iraq and Afghanistan and Tsunami assistance*. We believe *REAL ID* should be deliberated through customary Senatorial processes with respect for the rules and the issues at stake. For these reasons, we ask that you oppose it. Instead, MALDEF urges Senators to address the urgent need for comprehensive immigration reform.

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Specifically, the four provisions of *REAL ID* would: (1) overturn and change the *Intelligence Reform Act's* smart ID and related intelligence reform measures; (2) devolve judicial authority over immigration matters to bail bondspersons; (3) similarly devolve judicial authority over asylum decisions and unnecessarily restrict access to asylum for those fleeing dictatorships and persecution; and (4) devolve judicial oversight over any matters related to the construction of further military fencing at the border, leading to further deaths at the border. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact me at (213) 629-2512, or Katherine Culliton, Esq. in our D.C. offices, at (202) 293-2828.

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Sincerely,

ANN MARIE TALLMAN
President and General Counsel

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Attachment: MALDEF's In-Depth Analysis of *REAL ID*

Protecting and Promoting Latino Civil Rights
www.maldef.org