

BEFORE THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

MARCH 29, 2017

PROPONENT TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 60

Chairman Green, Vice Chair Greenspan, and Ranking Member Sheehy, I am Ric Oxender of Oxender and Associates. I am here today speaking on behalf of the six AAA Clubs across Ohio, and representing over 2 million Ohio motorists, your constituents.

We believe that HB60 will be of benefit to many Ohioans that travel beyond its borders. Enhanced Driver's licenses or EDL's are relatively new.

According to the US Passport Service Guide only five states currently offer EDL's; Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Vermont and Washington.

The US Dept. of State and the Dept. of Homeland Security formed the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative jointly. In 2009 the WHTI implemented its plan for entry into the US from Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean by land and sea border crossings. However, EDL's are NOT accepted for air travel within those countries.

The EDL allows citizens of the US to use the EDL rather than a passport for entry. The EDL is a secure, highly tamper resistant license that includes vicinity radio frequency identification capability and contains multiple layers of overt, covert and forensic security features. This RFID technology refers to

systems that allow a device to read information contained in a wireless device or “tag” from a distance without making any physical contact or requiring a line of sight between the two. It provides a method to transmit and receive data from one point to another. There are two types of this RFID technology. Vicinity RFID means that authorized readers from up to 20 to 30 feet away can securely and accurately read an RFID-enabled document. Proximity RFID means that an RFID-enabled document must be scanned in close proximity to an authorized reader and can only be read from a few inches away. The US Customs and Border Protection

utilize vicinity RFID technology in most instances of land border crossings. The CBP adheres to the most stringent requirements for safeguarding personal data. No personal information is stored on the card; only a number which points to the information housed in secure databases.

For example, if you drive into Canada, the RFID chip is read as the vehicle queues for inspection at the border. It signals the database so that biographic information, a photo, and the results of any terrorist/criminal checks are displayed to the CPB Officer as the vehicle pulls up to the inspection booth. The CBP Officer can look at the results quickly

and focus on the individuals in the vehicle. This is better for officer safety and much faster processing.

Along with the five US states there are four Canadian provinces that issue EDL's; British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec.

Most of these states and provinces are on the US-Canadian border. Many Ohioans travel to Canada frequently. The EDL is less costly than passports, and offers a more expedient entry into these states and provinces. A state EDL is only available to United States citizens legally residing in the state of issuance. When a US citizen traveler presents the EDL, no other documentation is required for

purposes of proving identity or citizenship.

The top 39 land ports of entry in and out of the US are equipped with RFID technology that helps facilitate travel by individual presenting EDLs or one of the other RFID-enabled documents. This makes a travelers life easier than the usual checkpoints of the immigration border officials. This is also a quick alternative to a passport by land or sea.

AAA sees no reason why Ohioans should not be granted the opportunity to use the Enhanced Driver's License for travel to Canada, Mexico, or the Caribbean. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.