Letters

Readers Write (May 20): The Bernie Sanders campaign, the Legislature, license tab fees, Real ID, airport security

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REAL ID

State was right the first time in refusing federal interference

State Rep. Dennis Smith couldn’t be more wrong (“The key thing is to get a Real ID solution in Minnesota,” May 17). The legislative battle over Real ID has nothing to do with ensuring the ability of Minnesotans to fly. Even the U.S. Department of Homeland Security acknowledges in the final Real ID regulations that “individuals without a REAL ID-compliant document will still be able to enter federal facilities and board commercial aircraft, and these rules cannot determine what alternative documents are acceptable for those purposes.”

At its most basic level, the battle over Real ID is about whether the Legislature will voluntarily give up state sovereignty and individual rights protected under the 10th Amendment. Homeland Security’s privacy office admits that Real ID is a voluntary program for the states. To adopt it is to say yes to a federal ID, or as state Sen. Warren Limmer said on the Senate floor, a “national ID card.”

A one-tier or two-tier license doesn’t change this reality. State Sen. Scott Dibble clarified in committee that “both of these would be compliant because the federal law talks about both of those kinds of cards.”

Federal control is far-reaching. The federal law lets Homeland Security expand the “official purposes” and required uses of all Real ID cards without going back to Congress for approval. The Homeland Security secretary could require it for access to health care, toll roads, banking and more.

The Legislature did the right thing in 2009 when it passed a bipartisan bill to prohibit implementing Real ID. Nothing has changed. Minnesota should not put unelected federal officials in charge of your right to buy, travel, drive or access services.

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