



November 21, 2025

CCHF Comment on TSA Plan to Impose \$18 REAL-ID Related Fee

Yesterday, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) published a notice in the Federal Register announcing a new “modernized alternative identity verification program” with an **\$18 penalty (“fee”)** for travelers who arrive at airport checkpoints without an “acceptable form of identification,” such as a REAL ID or passport.

Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom has the following comment:

The TSA’s decision to announce a plan to charge Americans who come to the airport without a REAL ID or TSA-acceptable ID just days before the biggest travel season of the year may convince more Americans to give up their state driver’s license and get the REAL ID card that U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander once called a ‘national identification card’ on the floor of the Senate.

As our commissioned [legal analysis](#), written by Scott St. John, former solicitor general of Louisiana, shows, the REAL ID Act is a ‘novel form of coercion.’ The federal government, which according to TSA regulations is hoping for 100 percent “card compliance” by May 5, 2027, is now planning to charge these Americans \$18 to fly, in an apparent attempt to secure compliance with a national identification card that 44 percent of Americans, according to the TSA rule, have refused to get.

As more than 100 Pennsylvania legislators [wrote in a letter to President Trump](#) in 2017, the federal government’s REAL ID program “usurps” state’s 10th Amendment rights, violates individual privacy rights, and is an unfunded mandate. Furthermore, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators testified to Congress on December 5, 2023, of DMV plans to digitize the REAL ID, put it on phones, and have real-time access.

REAL ID is not what the government says it is. REAL ID is a federal ID masquerading as a state driver’s license. Using REAL ID, the federal government is nationalizing identification, usurping states’ rights and privacy rights, creating a national facial recognition system, and laying the groundwork for a digital, biometric-controlled social credit system in America.

At a time when the British are protesting in the streets over the digital ID as a work requirement, the TSA-added charge will likely cause more Americans to get a soon-to-be digital ID to fly. Unknown to most Americans, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is authorized by the federal REAL ID Act ([“Official Purpose” definition](#)) to unilaterally expand the required uses of the soon-to-be digital ID far beyond flight, perhaps as a requirement to work, access medical care, or vote.

We call on President Trump to stop the TSA from enforcing REAL ID or charging citizens who refuse to get a REAL ID. We also call on Congress to pass U.S. Senator Rand Paul’s bill to repeal the REAL ID Act, S. 2769 (*Safeguarding Personal Information Act*). No American should be forced to participate in the REAL ID system or pay extra to fly because they do not have a national identification card.

About Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom: CCHF exists to protect patient and doctor freedom. As a national, independent, non-partisan, non-profit health freedom organization, CCHF maintains a patient-centered, privacy-focused, free-market perspective.