MANDATORY E-VERIFY: JUST THE FACTS

DOESN’T WORK

- **E-Verify has a 54% fail rate.** By the government’s own statistics, E-verify will correctly identify illegal workers less than 50% of the time. The rest of the time the documents provided by these workers will make it through the system and they will remain working.

BAD FOR TAXPAYERS

- **Pushing illegal workers off of the tax rolls would decrease federal tax revenues by $17.3 billion, according to the Congressional Budget Office.** That’s a bad deal for the American taxpayer.

- Even if E-Verify is “mandatory,” many employers will choose not to participate or will go into the underground economy to avoid the system. In Arizona, only half of all new hires were run through the system after it became mandatory for all employers.

BAD FOR LEGAL WORKERS

- **Although the program identifies illegal workers less than half of the time, it will erroneously flag legal workers due to errors in government databases.** According to the Social Security Administration, mandatory E-Verify will force 3.6 million legal workers to have to get their records corrected by a government agency or lose their jobs. These errors put an enormous burden on workers and can result in loss of wages, adverse action by employers, and loss of employment. The Center for American Progress calculates that E-Verify errors will cost each legitimate worker $190 in lost wages and transportation as they try to correct the government’s mistakes. The Government Accounting Office called the process of fixing government database errors “formidable” and SSA reported in 2010 that 3.3 million visitors left a field office without receiving service.

- **In fact, 770,000 workers would likely lose their jobs due to database errors, according to conservative estimates based on government data.** Already in FY10, it is estimated that 80,000 workers lost their jobs due to E-Verify.
Because employers would be able to screen employees before hiring them, legal workers—including native-born Americans—who are subject to errors in government databases will have a hard time getting hired in the first place. **Government statistics show that 66% of employers** take “adverse actions” against workers once E-Verify flags them—even if they do not receive a final notice from the system.

Legal, foreign-born workers—even U.S. citizens—will be severely hurt by this proposal. **Naturalized citizens are at least 30 times more likely than native-born citizens to be falsely identified as “unauthorized” by this program.** Legal permanent residents are 10 times more likely, and temporary workers (for example, those holding H-1B visas) are 50 times more likely to be falsely identified as illegal.

**BAD FOR SMALL BUSINESSES**

- Currently, just 2% of small businesses and 4% of all employers in America use E-Verify. **Rapid expansion of the program to all employers in all industries in just a few short years would have serious, untold consequences for American workers, businesses, and taxpayers.** [Source: Westat study and DHS data on E-Verify users combined with Census information on the number and size of employers in America.]

- Making E-Verify mandatory will hurt small businesses, which make up 99.7% of all employers and have generated **64 percent** of net new jobs over the last 15 years. **According to data compiled by Bloomberg, if E-Verify were mandatory for all employers in fiscal year 2010, it would have cost small businesses $2.6 billion.** These employers would also have to master an 82-page manual, take a 3-hour tutorial, and spend time and resources haggling with government bureaucrats when workers are erroneously disqualified. Obviously, the increased costs to businesses implementing E-Verify will be passed on to consumers.

- **E-Verify will destroy American agriculture, driving up food costs, sending jobs overseas, and forcing us to import more of our produce from foreign sources.** Up to **75 percent** of the U.S. agricultural labor force is comprised of unauthorized workers. Even in this difficult economy, experts agree that Americans are not going to return to the fields to pick crops if we force out 3 million agriculture workers. In addition, according to the **Department of Agriculture**, for every on-farm job there are about 3.1 “upstream” and “downstream” jobs. That means that deporting an illegal farm worker and sending production overseas eliminates other jobs currently held by Americans.

- **Most unemployed Americans will not go to work in the fields.** Agriculture work is not exactly what most out-of-work Americans are looking for. When Georgia passed a mandatory E-Verify law, **11,000 agricultural jobs went unfilled** during peak harvest season.