

Reps. Taub, Stakoe, Pastor, Schuitmaker, Stahl, Vander Veen, Pavlov, Rocca, Acciavatti, Ward, Tobocman, Garfield, Shaffer, Farhat, Amos, Marleau, LaJoy, Gaffney, Sheen, Kahn, Palsrok, Kooiman and Hildenbrand offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 188.

A resolution to memorialize the President and the Congress of the United States to oppose implementation of the proposed rules under the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative requiring all citizens of any age of the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda to have a passport to enter or re-enter the United States.

Whereas, The Michigan-Canada crossing is the busiest border crossing in North America, including commerce, tourism, trade, workers, and students, averaging hundreds of millions of dollars in trade value per day in Michigan alone and hundreds of billions of dollars per year across the entire northern border. There are 10 land ports of entry between Canada and Michigan, and in 2004 over 21 million passenger vehicles crossed at just five of those ports. In 2004, there were 58,000 daily border crossings to and from Michigan and Canada; and

Whereas, The Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative is a proposal developed by the United States Department of Homeland Security and the United States Department of State, to require that all citizens of any age entering or re-entering the United States from Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda, have in their possession a passport as the only acceptable documentation required by law as of December 31, 2007; and

Whereas, This proposal would have a devastating economic impact on Michigan by slowing commerce and tourism. The costly (\$97 for each adult and \$82 for each child) and cumbersome process of obtaining a passport may discourage many families, entrepreneurs, and tourists from traveling across the border. Many residents in border regions would be discouraged from taking spontaneous trips across the border. It is projected that the total number of persons crossing the border would decline, subsequently causing financial difficulties for bridge and tunnel operators along the border who largely depend on toll revenue to undertake maintenance and improvement projects. It is estimated that the impact of this policy would be economically devastating to Michigan because Canada remains Michigan's primary export market, with \$175 billion worth of merchandise goods exchanged during 2004 alone; and

Whereas, This proposal would end an 80-year period of trust between the United States and Canada that allowed for seamless cross-border trade and travel and the opportunity for education and employment exchanges; and

Whereas, Protecting our borders is critical to ensuring homeland security, and alternative means of establishing a traveler's identity and nationality should be thoroughly examined by the Departments of Homeland Security and State. One such alternative that would be much cheaper and less cumbersome could involve an identification code on driver's licenses issued in Michigan; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the President and the Congress of the United States to oppose implementation of the proposed rules under the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative requiring all citizens of any age of the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Bermuda to have a passport to enter or re-enter the United States; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.