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March 5, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

I write to request that you extend the enforcement deadline for the REAL ID Act of 2005. At this point, the current deadline of October 1, 2020 seems increasingly unrealistic. I believe that, without a one-year extension of the deadline, there could be significant disruptions for air travelers and America's economy.

An estimated 225 million Americans possess a driver's license. Yet, on February 19, 2020, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced that only 100 million Americans had been issued REAL IDs. That means that, in the 15 years since the REAL ID Act became law, fewer than half of Americans with driver's licenses have received new REAL ID-compliant licenses. Additionally, according to the same DHS press release, two states are not even issuing REAL IDs to their residents.

To expect 125 million Americans to obtain the REAL ID before the October 1 enrollment deadline seems nearly impossible. Achieving that goal within seven short months becomes even more unlikely given nationwide reporting that the process for obtaining a REAL ID can be overly bureaucratic and take hours upon hours from a person's work day. Speaking for my home state, I can report that the good people of Louisiana are too busy earning a living and raising their families to burn half a day waiting in long lines and jumping through hoops to get REAL IDs.

Thank you, Mr. President, for considering my request to extend the REAL ID deadline to October 1, 2021. I believe this is, at heart, an economic issue: Real America needs a REAL ID extension. I look forward to working with you to ensure the transition to REAL IDs does not disrupt the lives or livelihoods of hardworking citizens.

Sincerely,



John Kennedy
United States Senator