

Dec 14 2005 - Slaughter Offers Passport Amendment to Border Bill

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Would Create Alternative to Passports for Northern Border Crossing

If Passed...Would Mean Major Step Forward in Passport Struggle

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, has worked with officials from the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State to author an amendment to the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005 (HR 4437).

The amendment requires the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security to create a secure, low-cost, and easily obtainable border crossing card that meets the requirements of Section 7209 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, as an alternative to requiring passports to cross the northern border. The low cost, alternative card offers the same security and application requirements as a passport, but at a much lower price.

Slaughter said, "If this amendment is passed, it would be a major victory in the ongoing efforts to provide alternatives to the Passport proposal which threatens our border economy. I hope all my colleagues support this critical amendment to the Border Bill. Success here would be a huge first step in ensuring that both regular and occasional travelers have plenty of options when crossing our northern border. "

She added, "this is a critical juncture in our ongoing efforts to combat the passport proposal. The border bill may be our only chance for some time to impact this impending DHS policy change which could severely damage our economy. That is why I am taking action now and that is why all of my colleagues on the northern border should support this amendment, regardless of party affiliation."

The amendment will be considered before the House Rules Committee this afternoon and if it passes the Republican controlled committee, will be considered on the House floor tomorrow.