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# Keeping IDentities Safe®

In the **NEWS**

**Are Wisconsin's driver licenses "most secure in the nation"? Expert: Yes.**

November 24, 2017

Politifact//D.L. Davis

When it comes to driver's licenses and state-issued ID cards across the nation, one size fits all. The cards all follow what is known as the ID-1 format, which specifies a size of and rounded corners with a radius of 2.88-3.48 mm (roughly the same size as a bank card). But size is the only equalizer. Each state uses its own design, colors, data and text font. They also differ in their level of security.

How secure are licenses in the Badger State? "Wisconsin's driver licenses and identification (ID) cards are currently the most secure in the nation," said Corey Kleist, Department of Motor Vehicles section chief, in a news release a while back. To be sure, all licenses and ID cards must be in compliance with federal standards established under the REAL ID Act of 2005.

So, is the "most-secure" claim from the state Department of Transportation correct? Enhanced security The statement by Kleist came after the state DOT added what is known as the eNotify security feature to the system. It sends an email and/or text notification whenever certain activities happen, such as a request for a duplicate driver license or a change of address. If the license-holder doesn't recognize the transaction, DMV staff can help to identify the origin of the transaction and offer guidance to help resolve any issues, according to the DOT. When asked to provide backup for the most-secure claim, DOT public affairs director Rebecca Kikkert noted the department has been making the "most secure in the nation" claim since switching to new cards in 2015.

As part of the department's compliance with the REAL ID Act, all employees with access to key systems are fingerprinted and subject to federal background checks. Additionally, their work is subject to audits to determine whether applications are processed according to DMV procedures and state laws. Other changes included moving from having the cards printed at each DMV Customer Service Center, where they were laminated, to a centralized printing facility which uses a different technique -- polycarbonate cards.

The new cards, made by CBN Secure Technologies, feature black-and-white laser-engraved photos and ultraviolet ink on intricate images of the Capitol and state flag. Other features include a raised signature, date of birth, expiration date, driver's license and ID numbers and U21 (under 21). Those pieces of information can be felt when holding the cards, which makes them harder to copy. The new cards are expected to be completely phased in by 2023, as old licenses expire. "We were the first in the nation to deploy many of the security features our current cards carry; some of which have since been adopted by other states," said Kikkert.

Brian Zimmer of Keeping IDentities Safe, an expert on security of ID cards, said Wisconsin was among the first 10 states determined to be REAL ID compliant. In the 10 years since, photo copying technology and photo-manipulation tools have become more sophisticated. So the bar for prevent counterfeiting of driver's licenses has gotten much higher. "Wisconsin DMV officials aimed at exceeding that bar in designing the current driver's license, benchmarking the most recent designs and security features of other states, and coming up with superior card stock composition and advanced security features," Zimmer said. "At this date, it is the most advanced among those issued in the United States."

He also gave Wisconsin high marks for adding the eNotify feature, calling it "a very useful identity theft prevention service." Keeping IDentities Safe, according to its website, is a non-partisan, not for profit crime prevention and education organization based in Washington, D.C. Its primary purpose is to raise public awareness about the importance of ID security. Our rating A DMV official said "Wisconsin's drivers licenses and identification (ID) cards are currently the most secure in the nation." The state's new polycarbonate cards, featuring black and white laser-engraved photos, ultraviolet ink and intricate artwork along with its eNotify security feature makes the Badger State's cards security "the most advanced among those issued in the United States," according to an expert on identity security. We rate the claim True.

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## Twice deported fentanyl dealer able to get Mass. license under fake name

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles has yet again issued an applicant with a criminal background a valid driver's license under a fake identity that let him hide in plain sight. This time, it was a twice-deported drug dealer from the Dominican Republic who was recently arrested with over a kilogram of cocaine and half a kilogram of fentanyl, the synthetic opioid that kills nearly 2,000 people a year in Massachusetts alone. When law enforcement raided his apartment, they found him with an accomplice holding a nine-month-old baby just steps from the fentanyl stash.

49-year-old Wilson Soto was deported on two separate occasions and has used at least five different names, authorities say. Soto, using the name "Juan Baez-Castillo," was arrested for drug charges in New Hampshire in 1991 and subsequently removed from the country. He was arrested again in 2011 in Laredo, TX for illegal entry into the United States under the same fraudulent name. In an investigation, police used Soto's fingerprints to determine that he had previously used the names Julio Moreno-Morales and Wilson Isenia Rodriguez, all with different dates of birth.



Wilson Soto. Photo from CBS Boston.

But despite his long rap sheet, Soto had no trouble getting a valid Massachusetts driver's license under another false name, according to court documents. Soto obtained a driver's license from the Massachusetts RMV in the name of Orlando Maldonado, which he used to escape his criminal past, remain in the country, and resume his criminal career. When he was arrested in November, Soto admitted to committing identity fraud in order to get the driver's license in Massachusetts. He was probably even carrying a Massachusetts driver's license in the Baez-Castillo name both times he was arrested and deported before.

When police forced their way into Soto's apartment, they found over \$100,000 worth of drugs and another suspect, Cristina Richardson, 48, holding a 9-month-old infant just a few feet from fentanyl, one of the most dangerous drugs in the world. A few grams of fentanyl can kill a full-grown man on skin contacts. The child was taken to a relative's home, authorities said, and the state's Department of Children and Families is investigating. This is too common of a problem in Massachusetts, which has lagged behind others in securing its identity documents. That lack

of progress combined with poorly trained RMV staff, the opioid epidemic exploding in its suburbs, and a broken immigration system that has allowed for criminal illegal aliens to enter and re-enter the country over and over has made Massachusetts a prime target for foreign drug dealers.

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## **Corrupt CA DMV employees issue CDLs for cash**

Over 200 applicants for driver's licenses to drive trucks and buses were unable to pass writing or driving tests but were able to bribe their way to class A commercial licenses in the State of California. That's because a pair of corrupt Department of Motor Vehicles employees were entering false information into the California DMV computer systems and giving unqualified drivers the permits in exchange for cash.

Kari Scattaglia and Lisa Terraciano both worked for the California DMV for over ten years. Scattaglia, 39, was a manager, assistant manager, and a licensing-registration examiner since 2007. Terraciano, 51, had been there since 2005. The two processed applications for California CDLs, a requirement to operate semi or tractor-trailer trucks, and knew the DMV system and processes in and out. According to court documents, they took advantage of that knowledge.

The pair are accused of illegally accessing the DMV database in Sacramento and altering applicants' records to fraudulently show they passed the required written tests. Scattaglia, specifically, is accused of altering records of many applicants to show that they successfully passed driving tests, despite never taking them or even failing. It's also worth mentioning that Scattaglia is the daughter of the deputy chief of investigations and enforcement for the DMV in Southern California (note that this has become a federal case).

Scattaglia caused the DMV to fraudulently issue 68 valid commercial driver's licenses and Terraciano caused 148, each for the price of anywhere from \$2,000 to \$5,000. When the scheme was uncovered, Scattaglia and Terraciano were charged with identity theft, unauthorized access of a computer, and conspiracy to commit bribery. They both pled guilty and are now part of an ongoing investigation. The corrupt duo are facing a maximum 5-year imprisonment and \$250,000 fine.

They were part of a statewide probe that uses undercover investigators exchanging envelopes of cash with DMV workers - which has so far yielded the cancellation or revocation of over 600

licenses. Class A commercial driver's licenses in California permit the holder to drive vehicles over 26,000 pounds, including 18 wheeler tractor trailers. In the hands of a bad driver, these heavy trucks can be incredibly dangerous to highway travelers not just in California but all over the country. Worse, we know that terrorists across the world are seeking to commit truck attacks in the United States, similar to the ones they have already committed in Europe. Key to doing so is access to a commercial driver's license. When DMV employees dole out 200 commercial driver's licenses to anyone who can pay, we have no idea who is behind the wheel of trucks on our highways.

[Click here for the story](#)

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## **COUNTERFEIT IDS:** **A NATIONAL SECURITY, PUBLIC SAFETY THREAT**

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### **Greek police disrupt Europe-wide fake ID network**

A massive European fake ID ring was broken up in Greece that provided high quality documents to illegal immigrants so that they could travel from Albania to the United Kingdom. The counterfeiters were forging passports for \$580 and delivering them to customers within hours of receiving an order.

Albanians traveling freely through Europe with fake identities could present an extreme problem for intelligence and security agencies. One of ISIS's most famous leaders, Lavdrim Muhaxheri, deems himself "Commander of Albanians" and was behind a large-scale 2016 Balkans terror plot. He has also been seen beheading one prisoner and firing a rocket at another in ISIS propaganda videos. He was likely killed in a raid over the summer, but his call for all Albanians to join the jihad has reached over 300 ISIS recruits from Kosovo alone. Al-Qaeda and 9/11 taught us how dangerous it can be when foreign nationals travel using fake identity documents. ISIS is currently training its undercover operatives to do exactly the same thing.

A criminal or terrorist seeking to travel between the states here in the U.S. doesn't need a \$580 counterfeit passport. He or she can simply order a high quality driver's license for as little as \$50 and use that fake ID to rent a car or truck or to board an airplane - as instructed in terrorist manuals.

[Click here for the story](#)

### **Fox News: Truck attacker in New York used expired license**

Fox News indicated in an early report that the terrorist who drove a truck through a bike lane in New York to kill eight people on Halloween used expired documents to rent the heavy vehicle. Almost exactly one year and four days ago, we warned about a truck attack in the United States, like the one in France. On October 27, 2016, we wrote, "Could a similar truck attack happen here? Absolutely...U-Haul attendees make no effort to verify a driver's license, they

simply check the name and the date...[a terrorist] would simply need to show a fake ID before he got to pick anything from a cargo van to a 26-foot behemoth with a 20,000 pound capacity."

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## **Fake license tag leads to over 40 fake IDs**

Laurie Ramirez, 48, was driving near Porter Way and Swain Road in Stockton, California when a San Joaquin County Sheriff's deputy pulled her over for having a broken tail light, cracked windshield, and fake license tags. Before towing the car, deputies found more than 40 California IDs and driver's licenses and other people's credit cards and checks. Ramirez also had equipment and software to print checks and passports. Ramirez was booked into the San Joaquin County jail for identity theft, forgery, possession of stolen property and possession of access cards.

[Click here for the story](#)

## **Twitter loved this teenager's tweet about using a fake Pennsylvania ID.**

The freshman at Iowa used a counterfeit driver's license to try and get into a bar. The problem was that his Pennsylvania fake ID was obviously fake and the bouncer knew it - especially after four of his friends used similar Pennsylvania IDs.

The Keystone State's driver's licenses and ID cards are one of the most targeted IDs by counterfeiters here and abroad. Chinese document mills churning out cheap fake IDs have flooded our borders with Pennsylvania documents. Those IDs help underage kids get into bars, but also help habitual drunk drivers stay on the road, help identity thieves steal millions, and help serious criminals hide from police.

[Click here for the story](#)

## **Seven-year sentence for serial identity thief in California**

A California identity thief was sentenced to over 7 years in prison for a scheme involving stolen identities from at least 50 victims. Simone Aguilar, 45, pleaded guilty to possession of device-making equipment and aggravated identity theft, has been sentenced to serve seven years and three months. Aguilar's co-defendant, 49-year-old Gurpinder Sandhu, also pleaded guilty and was sentenced to nine years in prison. They counterfeited credit cards and California driver's licenses using cameras, printers, scanners, materials and chemicals, along with a blue backdrop on the wall imitating a DMV background photo. Aguilar and Sandhu used these identities to fraudulently purchase vehicles from car dealerships and retail goods from commercial stores like Macy's.

[Click here for the story](#)

## **Wyoming DMV catches life-long identity thief**

Frank Flores lived his adult life using the name, Social Security number and birth date of a high school classmate. He even got married as "Eli Grado." He was caught after he applied for a state issued ID in Wyoming, a REAL ID compliant state. The Wyoming DMV checks proofs of

identity claimed by applicants against federal and state records systems, and when suspected fraud is found the applicant is charged with a crime and prosecuted.

Flores had already scored a Michigan driver's license under "Eli Grado" without a problem. Why didn't the Michigan DMV catch him? The news story illustrates the value of REAL ID driver's license standards to identity theft victims. And yes, it was federal immigration records checked by the Wyoming DMV that unraveled the identity thief's false life. Now the victim faces the costs of cleaning public records.

[Click here for the story](#)

## **Identity theft trio in California stole 1,000 pieces of mail**

A California trio rented a U-Haul truck to steal mail and forge checks, authorities say. Upon their arrest, officers located over 1,000 pieces of stolen mail from Manteca and Elk Grove, California. Jeanne Macias Mendoza, Lom Van Nguyen, and Kimi Kollette Matsuno were taken into police custody. They now face multiple criminal charges including unlawful use of personal identification. Mendoza is also accused of providing false ID to police, possessing an altered, forged driver's license, possession of ID to commit forgery, having forged/false checks, and possession of controlled-substance paraphernalia. Nguyen is also accused of misappropriation of found property, having an altered, forged driver's license, and providing false ID to an officer.

See the article below, which includes advice from the U.S. Postal Service on how to avoid identity theft from people stealing your mail.



Kimi Kollette Matsuno, 45, Lom Van Nguyen, 41, and Jeanne Macias Mendoza, 43. Photo from the Modesto Bee.

[Click here for the story](#)

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## Missouri may face enforcement

Missouri residents may need to get passports to fly in February 2018. Missouri is still waiting to receive an extension from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to delay Real ID Act enforcement in the state. In October, DHS granted the state a grace period until January 22. This means that if Missouri has not received an extension on that day, Missouri travelers will need a U.S. passport or other TSA-approved identification to step foot past security checkpoints, according to Justine Whelan, a DHS spokesperson. This is also true for federal facilities and nuclear power plants. Missouri was dead last in enacting the necessary legislation to start up the state machinery to comply with REAL ID rules.

[Click here for the story](#)

## Massachusetts to become REAL ID compliant

The Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles will begin to issue REAL ID compliant licenses and ID cards on March 26, before the Oct. 1, 2020 deadline. Better late than never. Massachusetts residents will be able to use their state IDs to board airplanes and enter federal facilities.

[Click here for the story](#)

## South Carolina unveils new license

The South Carolina DMV has introduced a new REAL ID driver's license with an excellent video explanation. The REAL ID cards are compliant with the federal REAL ID Act of 2005 and may be used as identification to pass security at airports nationwide, enter secure federal buildings, and visit military installations. Instead of a REAL ID license or ID, you may use a valid US passport or other federally accepted identification for the above activities in the future. A valid US passport is still required for international travel. The state is also issuing new, non-compliant licenses and IDs that will say "Not for Federal Identification" across the top.

[Click here for the story](#)

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**It's now been 16 years since 9/11 - and the driver's license loophole STILL hasn't been fixed!**

Did you know that fake IDs are used for so much more than underage drinking? The 9/11 Commission said that identity documents were as important as weapons for the hijackers. Check out our video to learn how criminals, thieves, and even terrorists use fake IDs to commit their crimes.



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## Support Keeping Identities Safe

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See how we help keep IDs out of the hands of criminals and terrorists!



Check out our Keeping Identities Safe for KIDS program, providing IDs for children!

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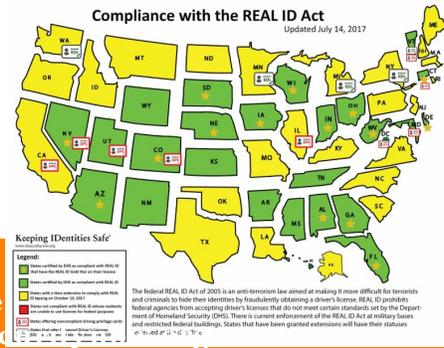
## How are we fighting driver's license fraud?

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- By raising awareness
- By working with law enforcement
- By helping states comply with REAL ID
- By working with state legislators all over the country

By providing research  
By working every day to protect your identity documents!  
*We can only continue to do this with your support*

[Click here for more!](#)



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