



**PUBLIC OPINION  
STRATEGIES**

*Turning Questions Into Answers.*

**MEMORANDUM of KEY FINDINGS**

Public Opinion Strategies is pleased to present these key findings from a national survey of 800 adults. The margin of error associated with a sample of this type is  $\pm 3.46\%$ . Interviews were conducted September 4-6, 2007.

**KEY FINDINGS**

There is overwhelming support for new national rules and regulations regarding state-issued driver's licenses and identification cards designed to help prevent terrorism, identity theft and other crimes.

Eight out of ten (82%) adults favor the program, while just 16% are opposed. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of adults strongly favor the program. This is not a partisan issue. In fact, deep and broad support exists across all demographic subgroups: party, gender, age, region, education, income, and ethnicity. With the recent anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup> and constant concern about identity theft, adults strongly support implementing a program designed to help make driver's licenses and state-issued ID cards more difficult to counterfeit.

More than eight in ten adults (85%) agree that to improve security and reduce fraud, tougher rules are necessary for people to prove their identity when applying for a driver's license or identification card.

Adults also agree that more stringent rules are necessary for people to prove their identity before obtaining a driver's license or identification card. Seventy percent (70%) strongly agree that tougher rules are necessary. To determine whether an issue, message, or idea tests well or is effective, we look for intensity of 30% or higher. This statement has more than twice that intensity threshold, meaning there is widespread agreement across all demographic subgroups.

And, Americans don't just say tougher rules are necessary: they are more than willing to be subjected to more scrutiny themselves. Nearly nine (89%) out of ten adults say that if requested by the Division of Motor Vehicles, they would be willing to provide additional identification information to prove their identity. Often times, we find a disconnect between what people say they support and what they are actually willing to do themselves. That is not the case here. The public agrees new rules are necessary, and they are willing to provide the information to meet the new rules.

Adults are also willing to pay more for a new driver's license or identification card that is more secure and resistant to identity theft and other types of fraud. Nearly ninety percent (88%) are willing to pay more money for a new driver's license or ID card that is more secure. One third (35%) of adults are

willing to pay an additional \$20 or more for a more secure drivers' license or identification card, 29% are willing to pay between \$10-\$15 more, and one quarter are willing to spend an additional \$5 or less. The willingness of nearly nine out of ten adults to pay more money for a new driver's license demonstrates the near unanimous support for a more secure license/identification card.

The top groups willing to pay the most are 35-44 year-olds, adults in the West, suburban Republicans, individuals with education beyond a Bachelor's degree, younger Republicans, and households with incomes of \$60,000 or higher.

The groups who are willing to spend an additional \$10-\$15 for a more secure license/identification card include Democrats, younger and older women, adults in the Midwest, rural women, and women in households with incomes below \$60,000.

African Americans, middle-aged men, Northeast adults, men without a college degree, Democratic men, and households with income below \$60,000 are willing to an additional \$5 or less for a more secure license/identification card.

A significant majority of adults agree that a new nationwide program for minimum standards for driver’s licenses/identification cards will help improve homeland security, protect against fraud, and make it harder to reproduce fake ID cards.

*Table of Statements Ranked by Percent Strongly Agree*

<b>Statement</b>	<b>% Strongly Agree</b>	<b>% Total Agree</b>
Many of the September 11 <sup>th</sup> terrorists were issued driver’s licenses by state governments. We need to make driver’s licenses and identification cards more secure to improve homeland security and prevent terrorists from getting identification cards.	<b>76%</b>	<b>88%</b>
States should be required to meet national minimum standards for driver’s licenses and IDs to make it harder for criminals to use fake IDs to commit crimes, such as identity theft.	<b>75%</b>	<b>91%</b>
Making driver’s licenses and ID cards harder to fake, alter or illegitimately obtain will reduce the use of fake IDs by under-aged kids to buy alcohol and tobacco products.	<b>64%</b>	<b>84%</b>
Driver’s licenses are too easy to fake and are too easy for criminals such as identity thieves and terrorists to obtain.	<b>63%</b>	<b>82%</b>

All of these statements resonated with strong intensity across all demographic subgroups. These new standards are not just viewed as a way to improve homeland security, there is widespread agreement across all demographic subgroups the new rules will help reduce identity theft and make it more difficult for criminals who sell fake IDs to other criminals or to minors attempting to purchase alcohol or tobacco.

**SUMMARY**

Across the board support exists for new rules and regulations designed to make driver’s licenses and identification cards more secure. Americans are also willing pay more money for these licenses, and—amidst heightened concern about personal privacy—are even willing to provide more information to prove their identity when applying for their new license/ID card. This is an issue that crosses party, ethnicity, age, region, education, and income lines. Regardless of how the question was framed about the new program, it tested with intensity of more than 60% in favor/agreement. Significant majorities support paying more money for a license that is more secure and providing more information to verify their identity

The public agrees that new standards for obtaining licenses and ID cards will help protect against terrorism, identity theft, criminals producing fake IDs to commit crimes, and making it more difficult for under-aged kids to produce or obtain fake IDs to purchase alcohol and tobacco products.