

Authorized users of NMVTIS

The Act specifies that the information within NMVTIS shall be available to jurisdictions; federal, state and local law enforcement officials; insurance carriers and other prospective purchasers (e.g., individuals, auction companies, and used car dealers).

The NMVTIS pilot

AAMVA has developed a pilot NMVTIS. The design of the system was selected by the U.S. jurisdictions as one that posed the least burden on the states for creating, maintaining, and operating a system for the exchange of vehicle titling and brand data. The purpose of the pilot is to confirm the feasibility and benefits of the system's technical design and operational procedures. The pilot will allow for a fine-tuning of the technical and procedural issues prior to the national rollout of NMVTIS.

Pilot participants are Kentucky, Massachusetts, Indiana, Virginia, Florida, and Arizona.

The Anti Car Theft Improvements Act

To implement the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System (NMVTIS) nationwide (i.e., post-pilot), the states need Congressional authorization of funds for grants. The Anti Car Theft Improvements Act of 1996 was signed into law on July 2, 1996. It amends the Anti Car Theft Act of 1992 to:

authorize funding for states' development of NMVTIS,

remove the cap previously placed on state grant funding,

give the Department of Justice the responsibility for the information system, and move the date of implementation of NMVTIS to December 1997.

Data available

Data supported by this system and available to its users include:

- registration and title data,
- brand history data,
- detailed vehicle data.

*Benefits of the system**NMVTIS will allow for:*

Titling jurisdictions to verify the vehicle and title information, obtain information on all brands ever applied to a vehicle, and obtain information on whether the vehicle has been reported stolen. This information can be received prior to issuing a title, which allows the title jurisdiction to verify the data before creating the title.

The VIN is checked against a national pointer file, which provides the last jurisdiction that issued a title on a vehicle and requests details of the vehicle from that jurisdiction. The details include the latest odometer reading for the vehicle. This verification of title, brand, theft, and odometer data will allow for a reduction in the issuance of fraudulent titles and a reduction in odometer fraud. Once the inquiring jurisdiction receives the information, it can decide whether to issue a title; if so, NMVTIS notifies the last titling jurisdiction that another jurisdiction has issued a title. The old jurisdiction can then inactivate its title record. This will allow jurisdictions to identify and purge inactive titles on a regular basis.

Law enforcement to create lists of vehicles, by junk yard, salvage yard, or insurance carrier, that are reported as junk or salvage. The Act requires junk yards, salvage yards, and insurance carriers to report monthly to NMVTIS on all junk and salvage vehicles obtained. Law enforcement's inquiries will allow it to use NMVTIS to further its investigations of vehicle theft and fraud.

Manufacturers to dramatically reduce the use of paper Manufacturer's Certificate of Origin. NMVTIS will incorporate the functionality of the AAMVANet Paperless

MCO application, which allows jurisdictions to inquire on an electronic MCO file for data necessary to create the vehicle's first title. The manufacturers reduce their use of the paper MCO, and the jurisdictions build their initial title records from the electronic data created by the manufacturers, which will significantly reduce data entry errors.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday, May 13, 1999, the federal debt stood at \$5,579,720,008,674.59 (Five trillion, five hundred seventy-nine billion, seven hundred twenty million, eight thousand, six hundred seventy-four dollars and fifty-nine cents).

One year ago, May 13, 1998, the federal debt stood at \$5,492,157,000,000 (Five trillion, four hundred ninety-two billion, one hundred fifty-seven million).

Five years ago, May 13, 1994, the federal debt stood at \$4,579,502,000,000 (Four trillion, five hundred seventy-nine billion, five hundred two million).

Twenty-five years ago, May 13, 1974, the federal debt stood at \$469,298,000,000 (Four hundred sixty-nine billion, two hundred ninety-eight million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion—\$5,110,422,008,674.59 (Five trillion, one hundred ten billion, four hundred twenty-two million, eight thousand, six hundred seventy-four dollars and fifty-nine cents) during the past 25 years.

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS COVENANT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, last night, the Senator from Alaska and I introduced the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Covenant Implementation Act, legislation to end immigration abuses in a U.S. territory known as the CNMI. This is a bipartisan reform bill, and the changes we propose were supported by the Clinton Administration during the 105th Congress.

I commend my colleague from Alaska, Senator MURKOWSKI, for his leadership on CNMI reform. He traveled more than 10,000 miles to get a first-hand understanding of this issue. Our bill responds to the profound problems that we witnessed while visiting the CNMI.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is a group of islands located in the far western Pacific. Following World War II, the United States administered the islands under a U.N. Trusteeship.

In 1975, the people of the CNMI voted for political union with the United States. Today, the CNMI is a U.S. territory.

A 1976 covenant enacted by Congress gave U.S. citizenship to CNMI residents. The covenant also exempted the Commonwealth from U.S. immigration law. This exemption led to the immigration abuses that our bill will correct.

I don't represent the CNMI, but the Commonwealth is in Hawaii's backyard. I speak as a friend and neighbor

when I say that conditions in the CNMI must change. The CNMI system of indentured immigrant labor is morally wrong, and violates basic democratic principles.

The CNMI shares the American flag, but it does not share our immigration system. When the Commonwealth became a territory of the United States, we allowed them to write their own immigration laws. After twenty years of experience, we know that the CNMI immigration experiment has failed.

Conditions in the CNMI prompt the question whether the United States should operate a unified system of immigration, or whether a U.S. territory should be allowed to establish laws in conflict with national immigration policy.

Common sense tells us that a unified system is the only answer. If Puerto Rico, or Hawaii, or Arizona, or Oklahoma could write their own immigration laws—and give work visas to foreigners—our national immigration system would be in chaos.

America is one country. We need a uniform immigration system, rather than one system for the 50 states and another system for one of our territories.

There is a mountain of evidence proving just how bad the CNMI situation has become. Let me cite a few examples:

Twenty years ago, the CNMI had a population of 15,000 citizens and 2,000 alien workers. Today, the citizen population has increased to 28,000. Yet the alien worker population has mushroomed to 42,000—a 2000 percent increase. Three to four thousand of these alien workers are illegal aliens.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service reports that the CNMI has no reliable records of aliens who have entered the Commonwealth, how long they remain, and when, if ever, they depart. A CNMI official testified that they have "no effective control" over immigration in their island.

The bipartisan Commission on Immigration studied immigration and indentured labor in the CNMI. The Commission called it "antithetical to American values," and announced that no democratic society has an immigration policy like the CNMI. "The closest equivalent is Kuwait," the Commission found.

The Department of Commerce found that the territory has become "a Chinese province" for garment production. The CNMI garment industry employs 15,000 Chinese workers, some of whom sign contracts that forbid participation in religious or political activities while on U.S. soil. China is exporting their workers, and their human rights policies, to the CNMI.

The CNMI is becoming an international embarrassment to the United States. We have received complaints from the Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh about immigration abuses and the treatment of workers.

Despite efforts by the Reagan, Bush and Clinton Administrations to persuade the CNMI to correct these problems, the situation has only deteriorated.

My colleagues, the Senator from Alaska and I have been patient. After years of waiting, the time for patience has ended. Conditions in the CNMI are a looming political embarrassment to our country. I urge the Senate to respond by enacting the reform legislation we have introduced.

AGRICULTURAL BOND ENHANCEMENT ACT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, yesterday, Senator CONRAD, and Representatives NUSSLE and BOSWELL helped me stand up for American agriculture.

Agriculture is capital intensive. As a family farmer myself, I know you can't put your love of the land to work if you don't have the resources to get started.

My colleagues and I introduced a bipartisan bicameral bill that will expand opportunities for beginning farmers who are in need of low interest loans for capital purchases of farmland and equipment. This legislation is called the "Agricultural Bond Enhancement Act."

Back in the early 1980s, I realize the federal government needed to do more to provide young farmers an opportunity to start farming. In 1981, I pushed for pilot projects to establish the Aggie Bond program. After temporarily reauthorizing the program many times I succeeded in making the Beginning Farmer Loan Program permanent in the 103rd Congress.

Current law permits state authorities to issue tax exempt bonds and to loan the proceeds from the sale of the bonds to beginning farmers and ranchers to finance the cost of acquiring land, buildings and equipment used in a farm or ranch operation. The tax-exempt nature of the Aggie Bonds provides a below-market interest rate on the loan made to the farmer or rancher.

The program has been very successful, especially in my home state of Iowa. Since the beginning of the program in 1981, more than 2,600 Iowans have taken advantage of this opportunity. Iowa's program has provided over \$260 million in qualified beginning loans and the default rate has only been 1.5% of the total number of loans. I believe most ag lenders would agree those are very good numbers.

We have an opportunity to make the Beginning Farmer Loan Program even better. Currently, Aggie Bonds are subjected to a volume cap. That puts them in competition with industrial projects for bond allocation. This is the problem we would like to remedy.

Aggie Bonds share few similarities to Industrial Revenue Bonds and should not be subjected to the same volume cap. Insufficient funding due to the volume cap limits the effectiveness of this program.

The solution: amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt small issue bonds for agriculture from the State volume cap.

During the past three years the Iowa Agricultural Development Authority has consistently used all of the \$24 million bond allocation it was allowed. Some beginning farmers had to sit idle until the next year to close their loan, or pay a higher interest rate if they closed their loan without the bond.

We cannot afford to stand by and allow the next generation of family farmers to lose out on an opportunity to start farming. The average age of America's family farmers continues to climb.

Deserving young farmers should not be forced to compete against industry for reduced interest loans.

The "Agricultural Bond Enhancement Act" will open the door to more young farmers and help cultivate the next crop of family farmers in the 21st century.

KOSOVO REFUGEE REGISTRATION

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, we are all horrified by the human suffering that we are seeing every day as ethnic Albanians are being forced to flee Kosovo. The scope of this tragedy is overwhelming. Many of the refugees have not only lost their homes and other material possessions—they have been separated from their families and stripped of their identities, as documents were stolen and destroyed. While NATO and the United Nations are trying to manage the refugee crisis, there have been glaring shortcomings in their capacity to help refugees to be reunited with loved ones.

I am pleased the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is looking to the private sector for assistance, and that the private sector is generously contributing equipment, funds, and expertise to help ease this horrible situation. UNHCR currently does not have the technological capability to furnish a registration system which could log and issue identification papers to over 400,000 displaced Kosovars who have taken refuge in Albania. So Microsoft, Hewlett-Packard, Compaq, Securit World Ltd, and ScreenCheck B.V., have offered to provide a registration system that will facilitate the distribution of relief supplies and assist in the reunification of family members. Clearly, this effort will make a substantial difference in helping the refugees in Albania to rebuild their lives. While we automatically rely on government agencies to respond to such a crisis, it is encouraging to see companies step up to the plate and volunteer assistance they can provide faster and more efficiently than the public sector. This kind of private sector involvement should serve as an example for other companies to follow.

UNITED STATES EMBASSY IN ISRAEL

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, yesterday, Israel marked 32 years since Jerusalem was united under Israeli control in the 1967 Mideast war. I rise today to strongly urge the President of the United States not to employ the waiver provision in the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995, but rather to fulfill the intent of that law by moving our embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Israel's capital city, Jerusalem.

The United States has diplomatic relations with 184 countries around the world. With only one of those countries—Israel—do we neither recognize the country's designated capital nor have our embassy located in the designated capital. That is as incredible as it is unacceptable. It is not only that Israel is one of our closest and most important allies. Nor is it only the obvious principle that every country has the right to designate its own capital. It is also that there is no other capital city anywhere whose history is more intimately associated than is Jerusalem's with the nation of Israel.

Jerusalem is the only city on earth that is the capital of the same country, inhabited by the same people who speak the same language and worship the same God as they did 3,000 years ago. No other city on earth can make that claim. Three thousand years ago, David, King of Israel, made Jerusalem his capital city and brought the Ark of the Covenant into its gates. Ever since, Jerusalem has been the cultural, spiritual, and religious center of the Jewish people. Twenty-five hundred years ago an anonymous Jewish psalmist living in forced exile wrote the following words: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept when we remembered Zion . . . If I forget the O Jerusalem, may my right hand lose its cunning; may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember thee, If I do not set Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Jerusalem has been a capital city of an independent country only three times in its history, and all three were under Jewish sovereignty: under the four hundred year rule of the House of Davids, under the restored Jewish commonwealth following the period of Babylonian exile (586-536 BC), and now under the reborn State of Israel. Jerusalem has been the capital of no other independent state, nor of any other people. It has had a continuous Jewish presence for three thousand years, and for the last hundred and fifty years, Jews have been the largest single part of its population.

In 1947, The United Nations General Assembly passed the Partition Resolution for Palestine to partition what is today Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza into what was supposed to become a Jewish state and a Palestinian Arab state. In the resolution, Jerusalem was to have been an international city under UN auspices. The Jewish community of Palestine accepted the partition