



Office of Representative Heath Shuler

Representing North Carolina's Eleventh Congressional District
For Immediate Release
January 30, 2009

Contact: Andrew Whalen, Communications Director
office: (202) 225-6401 / cell: (202) 731-5116

Reps. Shuler & Roskam Urge Obama not to Delay E-Verify Requirement for Federal Contractors

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Representatives Heath Shuler and Peter Roskam sent a letter to President Barack Obama Thursday night urging his Administration not to delay a rule that would require federal contractors with contracts of more than \$100,000 to screen their employees through the E-Verify system.

E-Verify is currently a voluntary, online program that allows employers to ensure their employees are legally entitled to work in the U.S. Shuler introduced legislation in the 110th Congress, the SAVE Act, that would phase in the E-Verify system for all American employers over several years.

President Bush had signed an Executive Order requiring the federal government to use electronic employment verification for federal contractors by January 15, 2009. The effective date was subsequently moved to February 1, 2009 under the Bush Administration. The Obama Administration has now delayed implementation until May 21, 2009.

In their letter Shuler and Roskam point out that, “given the present tumultuous state of the American economy...it is now more important than ever to ensure that federal contracting work is performed by a verified, legal workforce.”

Shuler and Roskam's complete letter is below.

January 29, 2009

Dear President Obama:

We are writing to respectfully urge you to consider immediate implementation of mandatory employment verification requirements for federal contractors.

As you know, on November 14, 2008, the *Federal Register* published a final rule promulgated by The Civilian Agency Acquisition Council and the Defense Acquisition Regulations Council to require federal contractors and subcontractors to use the

Department of Homeland Security's simple and efficient E-Verify technology to determine the employment eligibility of their workforce.

Although the rule was released with an original effective date of January 15, 2009, the implementation was subsequently delayed until February 1, 2009. According to a notice to be published in the *Federal Register* on Friday, January 30, 2009, your Administration will now further delay implementation until May 21, 2009.

E-Verify is an easy, internet-based system which allows employers to determine the legal employment status of employees using simple personal data and a Social Security number. E-Verify immediately confirms 99.4% of work-eligible employees, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services evaluations have reported that 96% of all participating employers do not believe the system overburdens their staff. To date, nearly 100,000 private businesses are already voluntarily using E-Verify to comply with our nation's immigration laws.

Given the present tumultuous state of the American economy, we believe that it is now more important than ever to ensure that federal contracting work is performed by a verified, legal workforce. Rising unemployment and a contracted credit market are making it harder for American families to make ends meet.

As you rightly stated on January 28, 2009, "The workers who are returning home to tell their husbands and wives and children that they no longer have a job...they need help now". We believe that reasonable accommodations have been made to give federal contractors ample time to prepare to comply with employment verification requirements. It is essential that the federal government lead by example and immediately apply mandatory employment verification standards for all federal contractors.

Thank you for your full consideration in this matter. The American people are looking to your leadership to create and sustain jobs and promote renewed growth and innovation in our nation's economy.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Roskam
Member of Congress

Heath Shuler
Member of Congress

###