



LARRY HOGAN  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MARYLAND  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

March 17, 2020

The Honorable Chad Wolf  
Acting Secretary of Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Wolf:

As the nation remains focused on addressing the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, on behalf of the nation's Governors I am urging the federal government to take action and extend the REAL ID deadline for no less than one year.

The ongoing public health crisis, which has resulted in the President of the United States declaring a national State of Emergency, has threatened the states' progress. As Maryland institutes measures to mitigate and contain the spread of COVID-19, the current standards under which an individual may become REAL ID compliant are counter to the state's efforts to slow the spread of the disease.

At my direction on March 11, Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) moved to an appointment-only system for all transactions in its local branch offices to eliminate walk-ins, reduce foot traffic, and keep crowds to a minimum. Additionally, I issued an executive order extending all licenses, permits, registrations, and other authorizations issued by the state, its agencies or any political subdivision that would expire during the state of emergency, until the 30th day after the state of emergency is lifted. And today, I directed further reductions of operating hours of MDOT MVA branches to cover only critical functions.

Currently, per the federal regulations, in order to become REAL ID compliant, every customer must visit an MDOT MVA branch location and present proof of identity, social security, and two proofs of Maryland residency. These proofs must be in paper form and must then be scanned into MDOT MVA's system. This process is at odds with our response to COVID-19 whereby we are encouraging social distancing, mandating telework for the majority of state employees, and severely curtailing hours of operations at our MDOT MVA branches.

Here in our state, MDOT MVA has issued more than 3 million REAL ID credentials representing over 66% of eligible residents, well above the most recently reported national

average of 34%. Although Maryland is well-positioned for a significant number of our residents to be REAL ID compliant, I remain concerned that many states are not in the same situation and there could be extreme travel challenges and inconveniences beginning on October 1, short of a regulatory delay by DHS. It is critical for states to be given enough time to modify our public awareness campaigns to avoid further customer confusion.

I appreciate you taking this information into consideration. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact me or my Director of Federal Relations, Tiffany Waddell at 443-433-6816 or [tiffany.waddell@maryland.gov](mailto:tiffany.waddell@maryland.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Larry Hogan", with a stylized, cursive script.

Larry Hogan, Governor