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BIOMETRICS & IDENTIFICATION
ASSOCIATION**

January 20, 2015

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The Honorable Michael McCaul
Chairman
House Homeland Security Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H2-176, Ford House Office Building
300 D Street, SW
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bennie Thompson
Ranking Member
House Homeland Security Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H2-117, Ford House Office Building
300 D Street, SW
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McCaul and Ranking Member Thompson:

The International Biometrics & Identification Association (IBIA) and the Security Industry Association (SIA) and their respective members would like to take this opportunity to express support for the Biometric Exit Data Systems provisions contained in Section 13 of H.R. 399, the Secure Our Borders First Act.

The United States pioneered the use of biometrics to enhance border security, and has since become the international standard through the development of a layered approach that identifies travelers based on who they really are rather than on which documents they present.

Yet the original vision of a comprehensive border security regime remains unfulfilled. For nearly two decades, Congress and the American people have waited for the establishment of a biometric exit system that would begin to fill the remaining operational gaps in U.S. border enforcement. Criminals and terrorists used that time to leave our country undetected and uninhibited – a lost opportunity for counterterrorism and law enforcement agencies.

Management Group

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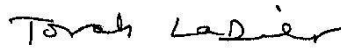
The Honorable Michael McCaul
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This bill represents a concrete step toward the completion of the biometric exit system Congress set out to complete so many years ago. By setting concrete timelines and goals, H.R. 399 will provide the necessary impetus to bring a more secure, biometrically-controlled border to fruition. This bill also provides the required resources and tools for the Executive Branch to demonstrate real progress on this issue – progress that has been notably lacking to date.

IBIA and SIA are particularly encouraged by the willingness of Congress to foster the modernization and development of biometric technologies, which represent the heart of the U.S. border control system. These technologies continue to enable a border which both facilitates legitimate travel and conclusively identifies those who would do us harm.

IBIA and SIA urge the support of both parties for H.R. 399 during today's full committee markup in the House Committee on Homeland Security.

Sincerely,



Tovah LaDier
IBIA Managing Director



Donald Erickson
SIA Chief Executive Officer