E-Verify Fact Sheet for Washington State

E-verify is an internet-based employment eligibility verification system used by some businesses to check the work eligibility of employees. The database is administered by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Social Security Administration (SSA). While proponents claim e-verify will eliminate the hiring of workers with authorization, numerous studies have shown that the system is riddled with database errors, results in delays or rejection of eligible U.S. Citizens and lawful permanent residents, and may result in discriminatory hiring practices. **<u>E-verify is wrong for Washington.</u>**

- **The databases used in administering e-verify are riddled with errors that often lead to U.S. Citizens and lawful immigrant workers facing delays in or denial of employment.** While the Department of Homeland Security claims a 94% success rate of e-verify (meaning that 6% of workers verified receive temporary non-confirmation notices (TNCs) for having discrepancies between the employment information they provide and that housed in the databases), independent studies on large multinational companies have show rates as high as 15%. Even more troubling, a study of MCL Enterprises, which operates 24 Burger King restaurants in Arizona where e-verify is mandatory, found that 75% of legal immigrant workers received TNCs. A January 2010 audit by SSA found that 19% of e-verify requests were not even processed through the database and 49% of queries were not returned within the required 7 days.

- **Many small businesses and business associations oppose <u>mandatory</u> e-verify because of the added layer of beaurocracy and additional resources it requires.** Despite representing 73% of all businesses in the U.S., only 12% of businesses enrolled in e-verify are small businesses. Most small businesses employers cite the program lack of "[ease] and efficiency" for not enrolling in the program. One small business even estimated it would cost an additional $27,000 each year to operate the program.

- **Imposing e-verify on businesses will not lead to a reduction in unemployment, but instead lead to higher unemployment rates.** Utilizing the error rates discussed above and because simple spelling errors or one wrong number can lead to a TNC, if all businesses in the U.S. were mandated to use e-verify the SSA estimates that 3.6 million U.S. Citizens and legal immigrants would either lose their jobs or need to respond to TNCs within the required 8 days of receipt.

- **Implementation of mandatory e-verify will result in discrimination and undermine workers rights**. A 2009 DHS-commissioned study found that 42% of workers reported not being told by their employer of a TNC, resulting in the denial of their right to contest the finding. Moreover, one study found that 57% of employers used e-verify to pre-screen candidates, something that is forbidden under the program.

For more information or questions, please contact Toby Guevin, State Policy & Legislative Manager, at OneAmerican at toby@weareoneamerica.org or 206-452-8416