

Georgia insight

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"She hath done what she could." Mark_{14:8a}

February 9, 2007

How "Wired" Are You?

Barcodes, the most familiar of all electronic identification processes, have been around for a long time. Barcodes consist of vertical black and white stripes strategically placed to represent letters and numbers of stored data. Laser beams are necessary to decipher bar-coded messages. A good thing about barcodes is you'll know where they are, because they must be visible to be read. So, original barcode scanners posed no threat to privacy. They couldn't scan anything concealed in purses, backpacks, etc. However, current ones are far more sophisticated than the ones retailers first used, because barcode scanners can now be upgraded to read hidden radio frequency identification (RFID) chips that can be concealed anywhere in anything. All of us, likely, have several RFID chips in our clothing or homes right now.

While barcodes are a boon to retailers and warehouses, current capabilities and actual usage go far beyond pricing items and counting stock. It may surprise you to know that signatures digitally stored on barcodes can be printed on paper or plastic and may be read and duplicated by a correctly programmed scanner. So, be careful where you put your signature.

Magnetic strips, similar to magnetic recording tape, contain machine-readable codes stored with multiple tracks of information. Magnetic strips are on the back of credit cards that may, also, contain other technology. Homeland Security is interested in **smart cards** with a large storage capacity computer chip embedded with technology to compute, exchange, add or subtract data with a card reader. Smart cards, not only can store your signature, they also may contain your fingerprint, voiceprint, or retinal/iris/hand/face information in a smart chip or two-dimensional barcode. If waved near an external radio frequency antenna, a contact-less **proximity card** with an internal metallic antenna allows personal entry into restricted areas.

Radio frequency identification (RFID) chips with memory have radio transceivers that use radio waves to identify and track objects, people or animals from a distance. RFID readers use electromagnetic energy in the form of radio waves to identify and locate living beings and objects with RFID chips embedded or attached. Since radio waves are used, no obstacle can hinder their penetration of solid matter – steel, walls, windows, doors, sealed envelopes.

RFID may be hidden anywhere. If you discover one, you might find it practically indestructible and intentionally laundry- and dry-cleaner-proof. They're as small as a speck of dust and tiny enough to embed in nails, beads, wires or fibers, print on pages or paint on pictures. In fact, Flint Ink¹, one of the largest manufacturers of ink in the world and a supplier of ink to many U.S. newspapers, is developing RFID tags and antennas made of conductive ink that would appear to be normal printing ink. Tapemark¹ wants to embed chip-less RFID transponders of nano-resistant fibers into product labels and packaging. Such transponders made of fibers a fraction of the length of a baby's eyelash – five microns wide and a millimeter long – would be invisible to the naked eye. Whether the RFID is active or passive, its first component is a tiny silicon computer chip containing a unique ID number traceable to privacy-invading data.

¹ Source: *Spychips*, by Katherine Albrecht and Liz McIntyre, Published by Nelson Current

H.B. 276 Requires Individual Consent to Use Biometric I.D.

“Implanted personal biometric sensors, personal location tracking technologies, or any similar devices shall not be required to be implanted in any individual without the individual’s consent. The voluntary implantation of any microchip or similar device shall be regulated under the authority of the Composite Board of State Medical Examiners.” – H.B. 276

During the 2006 session Representative Ed Setzler of Acworth introduced H.R. 1558 that authorized a committee to study the use of biological information. After holding several hearings over the interim, on February 2nd he introduced H.B. 276 to protect the privacy of Georgia citizens. His bill prohibits the collecting, storing or use of genetic, biometric or unique identification data *unless* the individual has signed a prior written consent form.

H.B. 276 prohibits life insurance companies from using genetic information to determine an applicant’s eligibility for life insurance policies or rates they’ll be charged. Likewise, employers couldn’t use genetic data to screen prospective employees nor could educational institutions base enrollment decisions on the biometric information of potential students.

H.B. 276 prohibits the use of biometric data, personal or unique ID information and medical information on government issued ID or access cards or devices, as well as cards and devices that can be remotely read without the knowledge or consent of the holder.

This bill states that it’s an unfair business practice in Georgia to give or offer preferential treatment of any kind to individuals who allow personal biometric information to be collected as opposed to individuals who refuse to allow such to be collected.

Definitions. *Biometric information* means any indelible personal physical characteristic that can be used to uniquely identify or pinpoint an individual at a particular place and time. Such data includes, but is not limited to fingerprints, information from biometric sensors, deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) samples, retinal scans, palm or handprints, and X-rays or similar indelible physical images or representations. However, for the purposes of this Code section, written signatures and photographs will not be considered as biometric information.

Genetic testing means laboratory tests of human DNA or chromosomes that may identify an inherited propensity toward a disease or illness of which the insurance applicant has no symptoms when tested and which is caused entirely by abnormal genes or genetic material.

Biometric sensors are implanted devices or sensors that track or monitor an individual’s vital signs or personal physical information including, but not limited to, heart rate, blood pressure, or blood alcohol content.

Personal location tracking technologies are devices that allow access to information pinpointing an individual at a particular location at a specific point in time. This includes, but is not limited to, global positioning systems (GPS) tracking chips or RFID devices.

H.B. 276 directs the proper collection, storage and sharing of biometric data and penalties for the negligent, reckless, or intentional compromising and use of unauthorized data. Convicted violators could be charged with misdemeanors or felonies. Misdemeanors could result in a fine of \$500 with no jail time or one to three years prison and \$5,000 in fines for felonies.

ACTION – Support. Call House Non-Civil Judiciary Representatives Ralston, 404 656-5943; Mumford, 656-0254; Bearden, 656-0287; Byrd & Mangham, 656-0126; Cole, 651-7737; Collins & Everson, 656-0188; Cooper, 463-8142; Franklin, 656-5087; Knox, 656-7855; Lunsford, 656-7146; Setzler, 656-0177; Abdul-Salaam, 656-0325; Abrams, 656-0220; Benfield, 656-7859; Levitas, 656-0116; Randall, 656-0109.

National ID Card to be Required in 2008

National ID cards would intrude into individual and states' rights. Five-year cost: \$11 billion.

S.B. 5 De-fangs the Federal Real ID Act

Thankfully, Georgia legislators are fighting current threatened intrusions into the privacy of individual citizens. That's evident by H.B. 276 just discussed on the previous pages, as well as **S.B. 5** that was pre-filed on November 28, 2006 by Senator Mitch Seabaugh and officially introduced January 23rd. His bill would delay the implementation of federal legislation that's coming down the pike next year.

After May 11, 2008 federal agencies are scheduled to accept only drivers' licenses and ID cards that comply with the Real ID Act Congress passed in 2005. Passage of the Real ID Act amounted to a sneak attack from the highest level of government, because it was attached to a vital supplemental spending bill for defense and tsunami relief. That tactic allowed no opportunity for a full examination of the consequences of requiring a national ID card for U.S. citizens. The one-size-fits-all Real ID approach may actually increase the compromising of citizens' data and counterfeiting of personal documents.

It's an economically bad idea because the cost of implementation is prohibitive. A report from the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Governors Association, and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators suggests that the Real ID Act will cost states at least \$11 billion over the first five years. However, no money has been allocated from the federal level to lighten the states' financial burden.

Regardless of the cost and threat to security and privacy, those who refuse to get a federally approved driver's license would suffer immediate restrictions, some that are evident and some not so evident. Consider this. After this goes into effect, your current non compliant driver's license or ID card would get you stopped at the gate so you couldn't board a domestic flight. You couldn't open a bank account and you couldn't use any service or activity over which the federal government claims jurisdiction.

Driver's licenses and ID cards would be identical nation wide and information in state databases would interact with each other, resulting in a security nightmare with no provision for protection of individual privacy or data security.

That we know, but no one knows the ultimate requirements of the Real ID Act, since they've never been distributed. The Department of Homeland Security, originally scheduled to formulate regulations by November 2005, changed that date to November 2006 and, subsequently, moved it up to January 2007, which has come and gone with no regulations in sight.

Because of these enormous problems, S.B. 5 authorizes the governor to delay compliance with the Real ID Act until the Department of Homeland Security expressly guarantees that its implementation will *not* compromise the economic privacy or biological sanctity of any citizen or resident of Georgia.

ACTION – Support. Call Public Safety and Homeland Security Senators, Whitehead, Ch., 404 656-5114; Mullis, 656-0057; Chapman, 656-0045; Carter, 651-7738; Davenport, 656-7586; Grant, 656-0082; Jones, 656-0502.

Representative Manning hasn't officially introduced it and maybe she won't.

But, just in case, here's another warning.

Georgia's Pre-filed H.B. 11 Mandates HPV Vaccine for 11- and 12-Year-old Girls

"There's no proof Gardasil will stop cervical cancer. They haven't been studying it long enough to make that claim." – Dr. Clayton Young, Texas OB/GYN

Texas is making history as the first state to mandate HPV inoculations for adolescent females. Beginning in 2008 Merck's Gardasil will be forced on girls entering sixth grade in Texas, compliments of Texas Governor Rick Perry's executive order of February 2nd. They'll get a three-shot course of a new drug the FDA approved June 8, 2006 and added to the regular childhood immunization schedule 21 days later.

Parents or the government or insurance companies will shell out at least \$360 for the course of three injections given over six months. Supposedly, it staves off HPV-initiated cancer for five years. Then booster shots may be necessary for a drug that might physically harm children.

Is it important for parents to know the negative effects of Gardasil? Yes. So, here goes. At least 20 states and the District of Columbia have reported reactions to Gardasil – loss of consciousness, severe headaches, dizziness, a temporary loss of vision and seizures. Also, Merck's study of Gardasil involved only 2,000 people, of which 102 had adverse reactions, ranging from three types of arthritis experienced by some to death for 17, all claimed to be unrelated to the study. But how can they be sure? The drug is only eight months old.

If CDC/Merck druthers are implemented, nine- and ten-year-old girls will soon be inoculated, too, and they're just itching to tailor that same drug for boys. So, what's causing this rush to pump more medicine into already-vaccine-loaded children? Well, they say it's to guard against certain strains of cervical cancer caused by the human pappalovavirus (HPV), but look at all the money at stake and the economic boon becomes obvious. Merck's revenue from Gardasil was \$155 million for the fourth quarter of 2006 and \$255 million for the entire year. Does anyone doubt the money connection?

Thankfully, our governor has not issued an executive order to shoot-up Georgia girls, but H.B. 11 was pre-filed by Representative Judy Manning of Marietta. At this writing she has not officially introduced her bill, but she might do so before the session ends. If she does, PeachCare, Georgia's insurance plan for children would be saddled with much of the cost. That means tax payers would pay for a vaccine that might encourage children to think they can be sexually promiscuous with no danger of contracting cancer from HPV exposure.

California's governor requested \$11 million more to provide the shot to 50,000 MediCal recipients 19 to 26 years old. Texas and California have, obviously, adopted the CDC/Merck recommendations, but they're not alone. Ten other states might get on board and, from the TV commercials here and the pre-filed H.B. 11, Georgia's targeted to join the crowd.

This isn't the first or only vaccination mandated for prevention of STD. All newborns must be inoculated against Hepatitis B before leaving the hospital, although it's contracted only by sexual activity or IV drug use. So, here we go again. Instead of promoting morality and chastity, government sides with big pharmaceutical companies and mandates questionable vaccines for tiny babies and adolescents long before they're old enough to be sexually active.

ACTION – Oppose H.B. 11. Call Representative Judy Manning at 404 656-7857 and ask her to kill H.B. 11.

Georgia Insight is a conservative publication financed entirely by its recipients.