

Licenses expose broader immigration issues

by UPI

MEXICO CITY - The granting of driver's licenses to illegal immigrants in the United States may be at the center of the immigration issue and broader U.S.-Mexico relations. Sen. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y., said in a recent presidential debate that granting drivers licenses to illegal immigrants "makes a lot of sense." Yet in Mexico, federal law requires proof of Mexican citizenship or a valid visa for a license, USA Today said Friday. "When it comes to foreigners, we're a little more strict here," said Alejandro Ruiz, a director at the Mexican Automobile Association. Proponents for licensing illegal immigrants in the United States say it would ensure drivers safety while opponents say the licensing would legitimize those foreigners in the United States illegally. There are eight U.S. states that grant licenses without proof of citizenship, but a bill by U.S. Rep. Pete King, R-N.Y., would ban future attempts. "The fact that all 31 states in Mexico would have such a common-sense position shows to me a certain hypocrisy on the part of the Mexican government, because they are constantly criticizing those of us in Congress who want immigration laws to be tougher up here," King said. The USA Today report cites an estimated 11.5 million illegal immigrants in the United States compared to 500,000 in Mexico.

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