

BIASED GOPERS TAKING LICENSE, GOV SAYS

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Byline: BY KERRY BURKE and JOE MAHONEY DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

Body

GOV. SPITZER YESTERDAY accused Republican leaders of being "completely out of touch with reality" by suggesting terrorists will be able to get New York driver's licenses under a policy to make them available to illegal immigrants.

"Rather than make an argument based on substance, the Republicans are using the rhetoric of desperation, taking advantage of the memory of 9/11 to push their anti-immigrant agenda," Spitzer told reporters in Manhattan.

It was the governor's sharpest counterattack since he announced the controversial plan.

Spitzer called it "horrendous" that Assembly GOP leader Jim Tedisco (R-Schenectady) and state Senate GOP leader Joe Bruno (R-Rensselaer) have argued his policy would please Osama Bin Laden and the other monsters responsible for 9/11.

But he stopped short of rekindling his battle with Mayor Bloomberg, whom the governor blasted last week after the mayor voiced misgivings about the policy. Bloomberg said the plan could lead to hassles for Americans at airports because driver's licenses obtained without a Social Security number would not be accepted as identification.

Tedisco, meanwhile, accused Spitzer of playing "the race card" after advocacy groups allied with the governor slammed the Republican leader for allegedly comparing immigrants with terrorists. "They are attempting to deflect the discussion from the safety and security of all New Yorkers and voter fraud to a debate on race and religion," he said.

Assembly Republicans say they plan to go to court to derail the plan, while GOP senators are vowing to pass bills to make illegal immigrants ineligible for New York licenses.

jmahoney@nydailynews.com

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