

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 5518

To amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish remote oath ceremonies, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 8, 2021

Ms. GARCIA of Texas (for herself, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Ms. NORTON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to direct the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish remote oath ceremonies, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Virtual Naturalization
5 Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. REMOTE OATH CEREMONIES.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the
8 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Home-
9 land Security shall establish procedures for the remote ad-

1 ministration of the oath of renunciation and allegiance
2 under section 337 of the Immigration and Nationality Act
3 (8 U.S.C. 1448), as an alternative to an in-person oath
4 ceremony. Such procedures shall—

5 (1) use videoconferencing and other tech-
6 nologies the Secretary determines are appropriate to
7 ensure that remote ceremonies are secure and stable;

8 (2) require the least burdensome means prac-
9 ticable—

10 (A) for confirming the identities of remote
11 ceremony participants;

12 (B) for remote ceremony participants to—

13 (i) surrender their permanent resi-
14 dence cards to the Secretary; and

15 (ii) submit their completed Form N-
16 445, Notice of Naturalization Oath Cere-
17 mony (or any successor form) to the Sec-
18 retary; and

19 (3) include the distribution of Form M-771, the
20 U.S. Citizenship Welcome Packet (or any successor
21 form), and any other materials the Secretary deter-
22 mines are appropriate, to remote ceremony partici-
23 pants.

1 (b) REMOTE OATH CEREMONIES.—Section 337 (8
2 U.S.C. 1448) of the Immigration and Nationality Act is
3 amended by—

4 (1) redesignating subsection (d) as subsection
5 (e); and

6 (2) inserting after subsection (c) the following:

7 “(d) REMOTE OATH CEREMONIES.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section
9 310(b), an individual may complete the naturaliza-
10 tion process by participating in a remote oath cere-
11 mony, in accordance with procedures for such cere-
12 monies established by the Secretary of Homeland
13 Security, if such individual—

14 “(A) has an approved application for natu-
15 ralization; and

16 “(B) elects to participate in a remote oath
17 ceremony in lieu of an in-person ceremony.

18 “(2) PUBLIC REQUIREMENT SATISFIED.—A re-
19 mote oath ceremony conducted under this subsection
20 satisfies the requirement for a public ceremony
21 under this section.”.

22 (c) CERTIFICATE OF NATURALIZATION.—Section
23 338 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
24 1449) is amended by inserting “or, if admitted to citizen-

- 1 ship pursuant to section 337(d), within 30 days of such
- 2 admission,” after “upon such admission”.

