

Stacy Terrell
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April 2, 2007

Director Regulatory Management Commission

Dear Director Regulatory Management Commission:

April 2, 2007

Director, Regulatory Management Division
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Department of Homeland Security
111 Massachusetts Ave., NW, 3rd floor
Washington, DC 20529

RE: DHS Docket # USCIS-2006-0044
Proposed rule ? Adjustment of the Immigration and Naturalization Benefit
Application and Petition Fee Schedule

To Whom it May Concern:

I write to strongly oppose the increase of immigration and naturalization fees that the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) proposed on February 1, 2007. Every day immigrants and refugees already struggle to pay immigration fees. The steep increases proposed by USCIS would make it much more difficult to gain permanent resident status, reunite with family members, and become a U.S. citizen. USCIS should be helping immigrants become citizens, not making it harder.

I have worked for the past several years to help legal permanent residents fill out their applications for US Citizenship. I have also taught citizenship classes for those who have already processed their application but are wanting to prepare for the test. It is one of the most fulfilling volunteer opportunities I have ever participated in, but sadly the classes are getting smaller and smaller. Students have had to wait for several years until they can earn enough money to apply for citizenship. Many of these Legal Permanent Residents speak perfect English and have better knowledge of the US government than many native born Americans, but they are forced to put their dream of becoming a citizen on hold because they simply cannot afford it.

USCIS claims that the fee increase is necessary to improve service, and USCIS definitely needs to improve service. While I applaud USCIS's efforts to improve service, I do not think that the entire cost should rest on immigrants who are already paying taxes, working hard, and struggling to pay high fees while receiving poor service.

Immigration and citizenship are public goods that benefit our entire country and that we as a nation should help pay for. Immigrants work hard, pay taxes, and help revitalize our communities. In becoming

citizens, immigrants demonstrate their strong commitment to their new home country by learning English, gaining knowledge about American history and government, and swearing allegiance to the United States. We should be encouraging immigrants to become part of our community by gaining legal status and becoming citizens, not setting up barriers that block their path and keep them out.

For all these reasons, I strongly oppose the proposed fee increases and urge USCIS to reconsider this proposal, and to seek other sources of funding for its operations, rather than add more burdens on immigrants. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Stacy Terrell

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