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Sent: Monday, March 26, 2007 10:31 PM
Subject: [InternationalAdoptVA] call to action

USCIS Proposes MAJOR increase in Filing Fees - Call for Action

Dear Families and Adoption Professionals:

Fees are increasing at USCIS, and there is very little time left to voice our objection. The following is an outline on how the increase affects adoption and what we can do, as a group, to stop the increase. Please feel free to forward this message to any agency, listserv, group or individual who can help to eliminate the fee increases affecting adoption. We only have a week left to act on this.

Fee Increase Proposal

On February 1, 2007, USCIS published a Notice of Proposed Rule Making in the Federal Register that would substantially raise filing fees for most types of cases. If the proposed rule is adopted, filing fees would increase by an average of 66% over current fees. The proposed rule is subject to a 60-day comment period that ends on April 2, 2007. At the end of the comment period, USCIS will review and consider the comments it has received on its proposed rule. USCIS will then send its final proposal to the Office of Management and Budget for review. The OMB will make a final decision on the fee increase and issue the final rule.

Timing of Potential Increase

Fortunately, the "adjusted" fees will not take effect until the public has an opportunity to comment. The comment period is 60 days beginning February 1, 2007, and ending on April 2, 2007. The increase in fees should not become effective until June 2007 at the earliest.

Adoption-Related Petitions Affected by the Proposed Increase

Form -
 Petition Type -
 Current Fee -
 Proposed Fee

I-600/600A

Petition to Classify Orphan as an Immediate Relative

\$ 545

\$ 670

N-565

Application for Replacement of Certificate of Citizenship (used for name changes)

\$ 220

\$ 380

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N-600
 Application for Certificate of Citizenship
 \$ 255
 \$ 460

Biometric Services (fingerprints)
 \$ 70
 \$ 80

Together, Let's Make a Difference!

Adoption is expensive enough already, and it is unconscionable to raise fees by up to 66% for adoption-related petitions. This can be fought, but it needs action by everyone in the adoption community. Please forward this e-mail on to anyone who would like to see the increase rejected. Your action is needed quickly as we only have a week left to voice our objections.

Submit Your Comments to USCIS by April 2, 2007

Anyone may comment on the proposed regulation. Those interested in commenting should take time to review the proposed regulation and formulate logical, potentially persuasive statements. Comments will be made public, as they will be posted as submitted at www.regulations.gov. One should NOT include any personal detail unless s/he is willing to share it freely. While no one likes prices to go up, simply complaining about the increase in costs is unlikely to have an impact.

Comments must be received by April 2, 2007, and must reference the agency name (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) as well as the docket number (USCIS-2006-0044). Comments may be submitted at <http://www.regulations.gov/fdmspublic/component/main>, the Federal eRulemaking Portal, or via mail or courier, in **hardcopy, disk, or CD-ROM** form to:

Director, Management Division
 U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
 Department of Homeland Security
 111 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, 3rd Floor
 Washington D.C. 20529

Conclusion

Voicing your opinion makes you part of the democratic process, and this is how the U.S. government and legal systems are supposed to work. Although most of us hesitate to publicly comment, the government really does carefully consider the content of comments, as well as the sheer number of those responding. When USCIS introduced regulations to reduce the time for B-2 tourist visits from six months to 30 days, for example, there were more than 10,000 comments. That convinced the USCIS to shelve the proposal. Remember, the key is the QUANTITY of responses they get. It should not be difficult to get at least 10,000 of us to comment. Please take the time today to do this.

[Non-text portions of this message have been removed]

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