

This is to certify that this document is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. NS- 27,489 passed and adopted by the City Council on the 13th day of March, 2007

Rosemary Galley
Deputy City Clerk

COPY

RESOLUTION NO. NS-27,489

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SANTA CRUZ OPPOSING
THE PROPOSED INCREASE IN UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND
IMMIGRATION SERVICES FEES

WHEREAS, our nation's and the City of Santa Cruz' immigrants populations are making valuable contributions to the social, cultural, and economic life of the United States of America and City of Santa Cruz; and

WHEREAS, the City of Santa Cruz is home to many hardworking, tax-paying, legal permanent residents who are eager to become full Americans by pursuing the dream of U.S. citizenship; and

WHEREAS, recent Census figures show that 17.4% of Santa Cruz's population is Latino, 22.3% speak a language other than English in the home, and 15.1% are foreign-born; and

WHEREAS, on February 1, 2007, the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced a proposal that would raise fees for citizenship and naturalization services; and

WHEREAS, naturalization fees have been steadily increasing, and in this round of increases, the fee for Form N-400 for filing an application for naturalization, for example, is proposed to rise from \$330 to \$595, an increase of 80%; and

WHEREAS, naturalization fee increases result from our nation's fundamentally flawed system of financing immigration services, which requires the USCIS to rely almost exclusively on application fees to fund the delivery of services to immigrants; and

WHEREAS, the USCIS believes that it needs this massive fee increase to pay for major infrastructure investments and process enhancements, such as improvements in the timeliness of background checks, modernization of its outdated business systems through technology upgrades, facilities improvements and enhancements in its personnel training and recruitment programs; and

WHEREAS, due to the high cost of housing, lack of jobs that pay livable wages, and other significant factors many non-citizen households in the City of Santa Cruz have annual incomes that are less \$25,000; and

WHEREAS, recent Census figures show that the average per capita annual income in Santa Cruz is only \$25,728 and 16.5% of individuals are below the poverty line; and

WHEREAS, the proposed fee increase would negatively impact the quality of life and place a nearly insurmountable barrier in the path of legal permanent residents in Santa Cruz who seek to naturalize, many of whom have limited financial resources; and

WHEREAS, the USCIS' proposed fee increase is contrary to the spirit of our nation's and City of Santa Cruz' tradition of welcoming and integrating immigrants, and sends legal

RESOLUTION NO. NS-27,489

permanent residents the wrong message at a time when they are seeking to embrace U.S. citizenship; and

WHEREAS, naturalization benefits the City of Santa Cruz by helping to ensure that immigrants become full participants in our nation's civic life, which enriches and maintains the vitality of our democracy.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Santa Cruz that the City Council hereby opposes the proposed fee increase by USCIS and calls for a halt in the fee increases for all naturalization applications;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Santa Cruz hereby calls on President George W. Bush and the U.S. Congress to address the fundamental problems in our nation's system for financing immigration services by providing appropriations to supplement fee revenue to cover costs of major USCIS expenses such as infrastructure investments, process enhancements and capital improvements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council authorizes the Mayor to write to the Director of the USCIS and include a certified copy of this resolution, to urge that other means to enhance the service improvements are explored, including more Federal appropriations, to avoid increases in naturalization fees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council authorizes the Mayor to write the President of the United States, Congressman Farr, Congresswoman Eshoo, and Senators Feinstein and Boxer, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the President Pro Tempore of the U.S. Senate, to request their attention and efforts toward improving naturalization operations without fee increases, and include a certified copy of this resolution in the letter for inclusion in the Congressional Record.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 13th day of March, 2007, by the following vote:

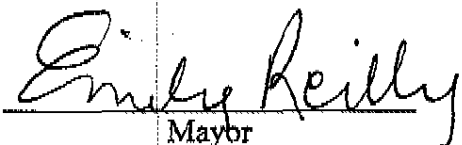
AYES: Councilmembers Porter, Robinson, Mathews, Madrigal, Vice Mayor Coonerty; Mayor Reilly.

NOES: None.

ABSENT: Councilmember Rotkin.

DISQUALIFIED: None.

APPROVED:


Mayor

ATTEST:


City Clerk

2007 MAR 30 AM 10:48