

March 5, 2007

Dr. Emilio T Gonzalez
Director, Regulatory Management Division
United States Citizenship & Immigration Services
Department of Homeland Security
111 Massachusetts Avenue NW, 3rd Floor
Washington DC 20529

RE: Proposed Fee Increase (Docket No. USCIS – 2006-0044)

Dear Dr. Gonzalez:

We, at Filipinos for Affirmative Action, want to register our strongest objection to your proposed fee increases. Proposing this fee hike on the heels of a proposal to change the citizenship test, legislation to escalate border security and simultaneous ICE raids on different workplaces across the nation send a very negative signal to the immigrant community. It appears like orchestrated and deliberate steps at creating legal, physical, military and sheer paper walls to the eventual integration of immigrants to the community.

After paying taxes for at least five years and not get any subsidy for a needed service does not evidence good stewardship and fairness on the part of the government. While lawmakers and their spouses get adequate social security and health care, farmers get subsidies, congress people get pork barrels and more money for armaments and Iraq, applicants for CIS services not only pay 100% of the cost but also shoulder part of the cost for some non-paying applicants. This is imposing on applicants to foot the bill for collateral damages of flawed foreign and domestic policies of the government.

Since naturalization would redound to the common good of the nation, the government should allocate subsidy for this service like it is doing for other more powerful groups in the country. Furthermore, there could be other items in justifying the fee hike that could be shared with other departments of the government. A proposed 66% on the average fee hike looks superfluously unjust and insensitive against a proposed 20% service hike in two years. Go back to the drawing board and look for alternative funding for services that hard working and tax paying people need.

Sincerely,

Eduardo Valladares
Newcomer Counselor