

From: A Sprague [mailto:setsuri2003@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, March 30, 2007 5:16 PM
To: OSComments
Subject: DHS Docket No. USCIS-2006-0044

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

Dear Sir or Maam,

Ref: USCIS-2006-0044

Our first objection with the proposed increases is that we have had to pay the fees twice due to documents that expire while we wait for our international adoption to be completed. China and other international programs are experiencing delays that force prospective parents to re-apply for I-600A and Biometric Services and pay the entire fee a second time for the same adoption. I feel this needs to be fixed before expenses are substantially increased, and those increases then doubled for those in a long waiting process.

I understand that USCIS has real expenses and therefore needs to charge corresponding fees. But, I also know that those adopting are a captive audience; they are pursuing a meaningful, life-altering goal and will pay more money when backed into the corner. I hope that the USCIS would not take advantage of that. International adoption is already a very expensive endeavor, and barriers like these fees separate orphans from would-be parents. There's little data on the number of people who never even consider adoption due to the cost involved. In that sense, the increase in fees may result in a decrease in revenue for USCIS.

Finally, I can't help but think that this is one Federal Agency robbing from another. The Federal Adoption Credit provides an incentive for adoption. As the dis-incentive mounts (cost), the Adoption Credit will likely also increase, and that gap will widen. It has the air of consumer rebates, whereby companies profit from the realistic hope that not everyone will file for the rebate. I'm not a tax professional, but it seems to me that this gap will result in a proportionally larger barrier to lower income families who already must spread out their Adoption Credit over several years to get the full benefit. Yet, these lower income Americans still provide tremendous opportunity to orphans, especially to those from very poor countries. At the risk of stating the obvious, an increase in USCIS fees for adoption primarily affects lower income Americans and provides a dis-incentive for adopting.

If these fees must increase, we urge you to do everything possible to pass the proposed extension of I-171H introduced by Representative Heather Wilson. [R-NM]

GovTrack.us. H.R. 5888--109th Congress (2006): Helping Families Adopt Orphans Act,
GovTrack.us (database of federal legislation)
<<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h109-5888>> (accessed Mar 30, 2007)

Sincerely,

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adoptive parents
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