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As a practitioner who can remember when I-130s cost \$10, I-485s \$30, and N-400s \$15, it is astonishing to see the rate increases that your agency has proposed. With the biometrics fee, an I-485 would cost \$975 and N-400 \$615 (assuming that biometrics will still cost \$70). The burden is crushing on many would be applicants who do not make as much as the average American. The rationale for such astronomical fee increases is chiefly for the agency to pay for its own services as it upgrades its infrastructure. I believe that the U.S.C.I.S. should scale back its ambitious plans to make the agency into a technological marvel. U.S.C.I.S. states that by law its collection of fees must pay for its operations and that is obviously true at present, but one does not see the city of New York or any other municipality attempting to fund new bridges or city buildings when in a fiscal crunch. At such time, municipalities know that it is time to strap their belts a little tighter. Such should be the philosophy of U.S.C.I.S.. Minimum and not maximum fee increases should be the order of the day. There is already a huge outcry against this fee increase which has resulted Senate Bill 795 and its House counterpart, H.R. 1379, which will change U.S.C.I.S. from a totally fee based organization to one once again only partially dependent upon collection of fees by authorizing annual appropriations to the Department of Homeland Security for an amount equal to the difference between the fees collected by U.S.C.I.S. and the cost of providing the services. U.S.C.I.S. would then be allowed to set fees to ensure the recovery of either the full cost or a portion of the costs of providing the services for. U.S.C.I.S. should be more sensitive to the financial situation of the immigrant population which provides such an integral boost to the nation's economy through its work, and ask for only minimal fee increases while Congress deliberates its funding bill for the agency.

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