

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2025

The Honorable Mark Amodei
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland
Security
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lauren Underwood
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland
Security
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Amodei and Ranking Member Underwood:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2026 Homeland Security Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that the Committee adopt report language recognizing the importance of keeping naturalization affordable and ensuring that United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) continues to offer fee waivers to eligible applicants. This is a cost-effective investment in the nation's long-term economic health and civic infrastructure. The report language should also direct USCIS to reduce application backlogs and expand digital access by enabling online filing for applicants seeking fee waivers or reduced fees.

Naturalization is one of the most significant services USCIS provides, producing measurable economic returns for both individuals and the nation. Ensuring that eligible lawful permanent residents (LPRs) can access the naturalization process promotes workforce participation, expands the tax base, and strengthens communities across the country. While USCIS continues to make online filing for many of its applications more accessible, applicants who wish to file for a reduced cost option for their Form N-400 naturalization application or obtain a fee waiver must file a paper application form.

While USCIS has introduced a PDF upload option for Form N-400 applicants paying the full fee, those requesting a fee waiver or reduced fee must still submit their application entirely by paper. This dual-track system creates unnecessary administrative burden and processing delays for both applicants and USCIS. Expanding online filing access to include fee waivers and reduced fee requests would reduce paperwork, lower error rates, and streamline adjudication—improving efficiency and reducing costs for the agency while easing access for eligible applicants with digital access.

Recognizing the shared interest in streamlining government services, we respectfully request the adoption of the following report language:

USCIS is directed to maintain naturalization fees at an affordable level; prioritize the reduction of application backlogs; and lower the cost of obtaining replacement certificates of naturalization and certificates of citizenship, including through coordination with the Department of State on the verification of derivative citizenship.

Further, USCIS is directed to expand online filing capabilities by enabling applicants to submit Form I-912 (Request for Fee Waiver) and naturalization applications requesting the reduced fee option through its online filing system.

Fee waivers are a critical tool for ensuring that lower-income LPRs can pursue U.S. citizenship and access other essential immigration services, including green card renewals and replacement documents. Fee waivers remove

financial barriers that can hinder economic mobility and participation in community life. When paired with naturalization — which is linked to higher earnings, increased employment, and greater homeownership — these tools help strengthen local economies and boost contributions to federal, state, and local revenues.

It is essential that Congress continue to support USCIS in maintaining and strengthening its fee waiver policies, particularly for applicants who receive means-tested public benefits or can demonstrate financial hardship. We therefore urge the Committee to adopt the following report language:

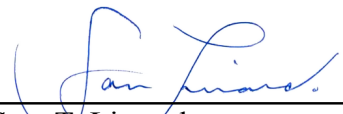
USCIS is directed to maintain its current policy regarding full fee waivers for applicants, petitioners, and requestors who demonstrate an inability to pay immigration and naturalization service fees. This includes preserving the eligibility threshold for full fee waivers at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Furthermore, USCIS is directed to continue offering a reduced fee option for Form N-400 applicants whose documented annual household income exceeds 150 percent but does not exceed 400 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines and are otherwise ineligible for full fee waivers.

USCIS is directed to continue to accept any one of the following items as proof of inability to pay an immigration or naturalization services application fee: (1) documentation of receipt of a means-tested public benefit by either the applicant or a child dependent upon the applicant, since the child's eligibility for means-tested benefits is dependent on household income; (2) documentation of household income that meets the criteria with respect to the Federal Poverty Guidelines or (3) documentation of extreme financial hardship due to extraordinary expenses such as unexpected medical bills, or circumstances including emergencies, or victimization. USCIS also is directed to maintain fee exemptions for certificates of citizenship for international adoptees.

Nearly nine million LPRs in the United States are eligible to become U.S. citizens. Expanding access to naturalization is a strategic economic investment that strengthens communities, enhances labor force participation, and supports long-term fiscal growth. Increased naturalization also leads to greater civic engagement and stability, helping to build a more resilient economy that benefits all Americans.

We respectfully urge the Committee to support the proposed report language to strengthen access to naturalization. Thank you for your attention to this issue.


Sincerely,




Sam T. Liccardo
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



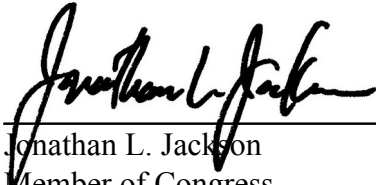
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



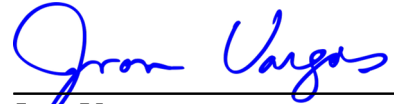
Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



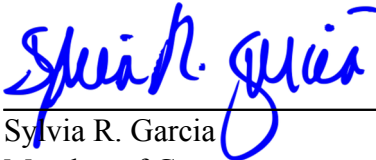
Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



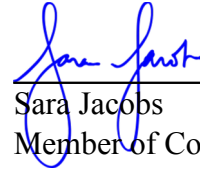
Jonathan L. Jackson
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Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
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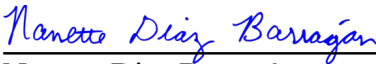
Sara Jacobs
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



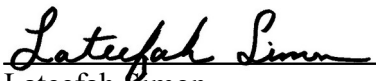
Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



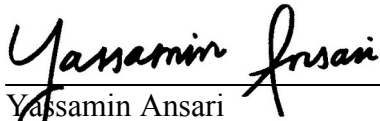
Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress



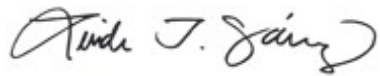
Lateefah Simon
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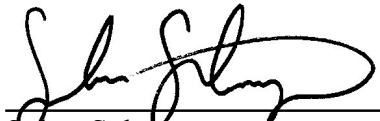
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



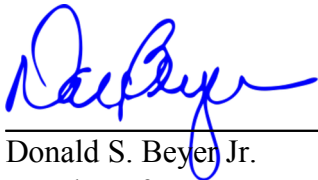
Yassamin Ansari
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Linda T. Sánchez
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Suhas Subramanyam
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Donald S. Beyer Jr.
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Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



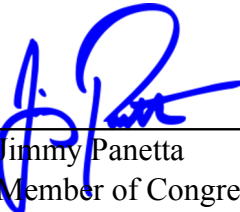
Al Green
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Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



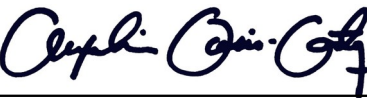
Cleo Fields
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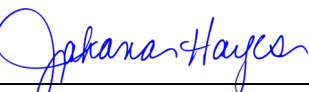
Jimmy Panetta
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Luz M. Rivas
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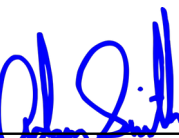
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



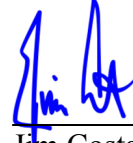
Delia C. Ramirez
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Adam Smith
Member of Congress



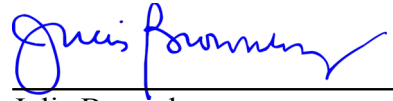
Andre Carson
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Jim Costa
Member of Congress



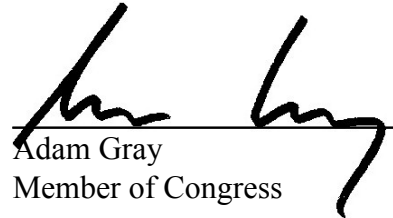
Pramila Jayapal
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Julia Brownley
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Sydney Kamlager-Dove
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Adam Gray
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress