

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 9, 2018

L. Francis Cissna
Director
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, 4th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20529

Dear Director Cissna:

We write to you with deep concern regarding new requirements that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has placed on congressional offices in submitting inquiries on behalf of constituents who have open applications under consideration by the agency. These new requirements create barriers for congressional offices working to process immigration casework in a timely manner.

Immigration cases comprise some of the most challenging, voluminous and time sensitive casework handled by congressional offices throughout our nation. As congressional representatives serving Southern California, home to one of the largest immigrant populations in the United States, our district offices handle a significant amount of immigration cases, working with USCIS staff in local and regional offices to assist our constituents.

By requesting that immigrants provide a full translation of all documents into English by a certified translation service, USCIS would delay the ability of our constituents to submit privacy release forms to a congressional office and would require that these applicants incur additional costs beyond the costly USCIS application fees they pay to process applications. By requiring that our offices secure additional privacy releases from constituents for previously opened and active cases, it creates further barriers for our offices to assist in processing cases in a timely manner. When applications to petition for an alien relative, to request asylum or to obtain permanent residency can last for months and years at a time, requiring further release forms from a constituent for long active cases would add unnecessary barriers for offices to assist our constituents.

At a time when USCIS is struggling with significant backlogs in processing immigration applications and congressional offices are receiving increasing volumes of immigration casework, we cannot support these changes to the USCIS casework process. As such, we call on

USCIS to reconsider these changes and to work with our offices to agree to procedures that do not hamper the already challenging immigration application process.

Sincerely,



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress