

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 18, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., SE  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Mr. Joseph B. Edlow  
Director  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
5900 Capital Gateway Dr.  
Camp Springs, MD 20588

Dear Secretary Noem and Director Edlow:

We write to express our grave concern and strong opposition to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' (USCIS) December 2, 2025 announcement indefinitely pausing the adjudication of all immigration applications for nationals from the 19 countries named in President Trump's discriminatory travel ban.<sup>1</sup> Across the country, green card applications, naturalization interviews, and even oath ceremonies are being paused or cancelled, solely on the basis of the applicants' national origin. Despite the Trump Administration's claims of going after the "worst of the worst," it is attacking the very people who have followed every process and undergone extensive and repeated vetting to secure legal status. This sweeping action is unjustified, discriminatory, and inconsistent with our nation's founding principles. We demand that you lift this pause immediately.

This indefinite pause is already causing significant harm. Immigrants are reportedly being notified that interviews and decisions have been halted presumably for no reason other than their country of origin.<sup>2</sup> For those applying for green cards, they are choosing to seek permanent residency and embark on the financial commitment and years-long path to apply for citizenship. And for those approved for naturalization, they have successfully followed every rule to become a U.S. citizen. In some cases, individuals who have fully passed the citizenship exam were pulled out of line by USCIS officers' moments before their oath ceremonies.<sup>3</sup>

These naturalization ceremonies are a time of celebration, as soon-to-be U.S. citizens welcome their friends and family to witness their achievement of becoming a U.S. citizen. To deny this monumental achievement to those who have waited years, if not decades, to pledge the Oath of Allegiance, delaying their naturalization through no fault of their own, is a slap in the face to all those who have devoted their time and energy to become U.S. citizens. It is also a waste of USCIS resources, such as employees who adjudicated applications, which includes vetting and screening, throughout the process.

It has become clear that this administration is threatening our country's longstanding legal immigration and citizenship pathways. Many of the people now being blocked have lived in the United States for years, contributing to their communities and undergoing extensive and

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<sup>1</sup> USCIS Policy Memorandum, *Hold and Review All Pending Asylum Applications and all USCIS Benefit Applications Filed by Aliens from High-Risk Countries*, (Dec. 2, 2025), <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/policy-alerts/PM-602-0192-PendingApplicationsHighRiskCountries-20251202.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Jazmine Ulloa and Orlando Mayorquín, *One Step From Citizenship, Some Find It Eludes Their Grasp*, NEW YORK TIMES (Dec. 6, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/12/06/us/immigration-citizenship-naturalization-trump.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Thea DiGiammerino, *Trump administration abruptly cancels citizenship ceremonies for some immigrants*, NBC BOSTON (Dec. 8, 2025), <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/trump-administration-abruptly-cancels-citizenship-ceremonies-immigrant-rcna248046>.

repeated vetting by DHS. Many have been screened multiple times throughout the immigration process. To suggest categorically, without any individual review of the case, that these same long-time residents suddenly pose a serious threat, defies both logic and the government's own record.

The Trump Administration has been quick to issue this broad, sweeping policy change but characteristically slow to clarify how long this pause will last, or whether this change will be permanent. Initial guidance USCIS issued has not presented any details of additional vetting that is needed or that should be conducted. The callous decision to halt these immigrant applications is reprehensible and the effects will be devastating for immigrants and citizens alike. Without clarity on how long this broad pause will last, soon-to-be citizens will be left in limbo for perpetuity and families will be forced to remain separated. What is clear is that no amount of vetting, moral-character, or commitment to this country and its democratic values is enough to satiate the Trump Administration. We oppose the Trump Administration's actions and urge you to lift this pause immediately.

Given the far-reaching consequences of these impacts, we seek transparency on this decision and request a response to the following questions by December 31, 2025:

1. How many individuals have had their citizenship ceremonies canceled since the policy change was announced in a USCIS memo on December 2, 2025?
  - a. Provide a breakdown by country of individuals impacted.
2. How many individuals and applications do USCIS believe are impacted by this pause?
  - a. Provide a breakdown by country of individuals impacted.
  - b. How many adjustments of status (green card) interviews and decisions have been canceled or halted? Provide a breakdown by country of individuals impacted.
3. According to the USCIS memo, Director Edlow will be responsible for determining when this broad pause on immigration applications is lifted.
  - a. How long will USCIS maintain this pause and does the agency have a timeline for when the pause will be lifted?
  - b. What is the status of the comprehensive review of the agency's security and vetting policies?
  - c. Provide details about the particular background and security checks that the Administration believes are deficient, or believes were implemented deficiently, which have prompted this pause.
  - d. Are any new background and security checks being run on the impacted cases that were not run previously – new or additional systems, for example?
  - e. Please provide this information in a report to Congress and post it publicly on the USCIS website.
4. The USCIS memo also requires a thorough re-review process for all applicants from the 19 countries under President Trump's travel ban.

- a. What are the factors being considered in this re-review process?
  - b. How is this pause impacting USCIS staff workload?
  - c. What resources are being reallocated to conduct this review?
  - d. What steps is USCIS taking to ensure that the re-review process of these applications will not result in delays for the processing of other benefits requests?
  - e. Does USCIS anticipate adjudicating all of the family and employment-based preference slots available in Fiscal Year 2026?
5. Will the pause or cancellation affect the prospects of individuals' ability to naturalize?
- a. What has USCIS done to reassure individuals that their eligibility for naturalization is still valid, and that this is a temporary hold?
  - b. When will impacted applicants be informed of their ability to continue their naturalization interview or oath of citizenship at a later date?
  - c. If an individual falls out of status due to this pause, can USCIS confirm that a Notice to Appear will not be issued and no enforcement action will be taken?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



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Pramila Jayapal  
Ranking Member  
Immigration Integrity,  
Security, and Enforcement  
House Judiciary Committee



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Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



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Hakeem Jeffries  
Member of Congress



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Katherine M. Clark  
Member of Congress



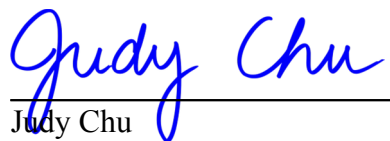
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Pete Aguilar  
Member of Congress



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Jamie Raskin  
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Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
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Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
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Greg Casar  
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Lloyd Doggett  
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Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



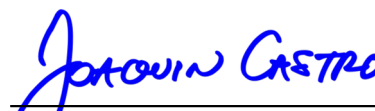
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Nikki Budzinski  
Member of Congress



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Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



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Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress



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Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



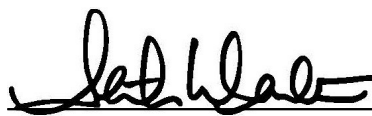
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J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



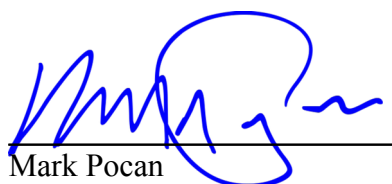
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Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress



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Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



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Lateefah Simon  
Member of Congress



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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



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MARK TAKANO  
Member of Congress



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Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

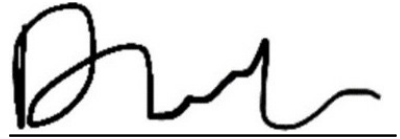


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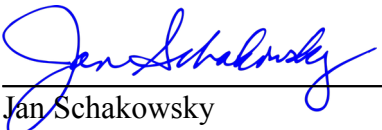
Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



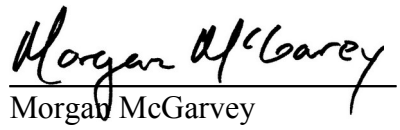
Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



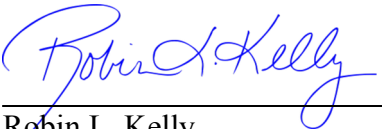
Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



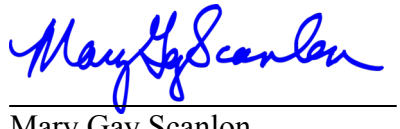
Jan Schakowsky  
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Morgan McGarvey  
Member of Congress



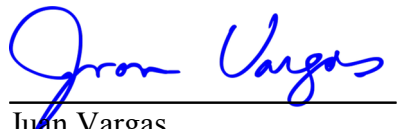
Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



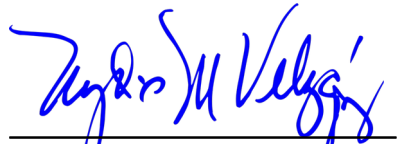
Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



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Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



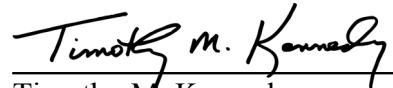
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Summer L. Lee  
Member of Congress



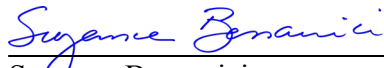
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Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress



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Timothy M. Kennedy  
Member of Congress



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Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



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Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress




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John W. Mannion  
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Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



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Joe Courtney  
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JM Tokuda  
Member of Congress



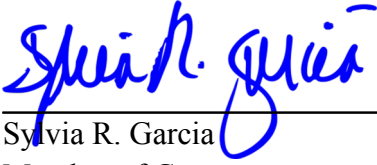
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Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



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Madeleine Dean  
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



Dina Titus  
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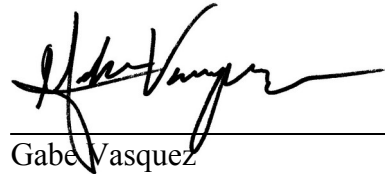
Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress



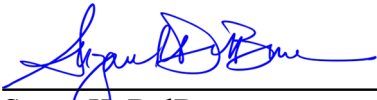
Jason Crow  
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar  
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Gabe Vasquez  
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene  
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Maxine Dexter  
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Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress





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Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



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Angie Craig  
Member of Congress



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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



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Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



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Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



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LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



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James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



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Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



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Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



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Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



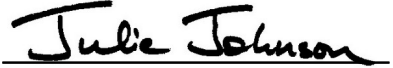
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Laura Friedman  
Member of Congress



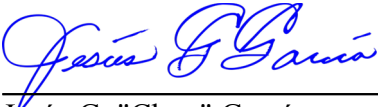
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Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



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Julie Johnson  
Member of Congress



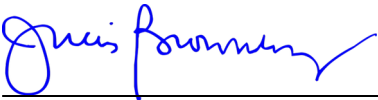
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Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



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Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress



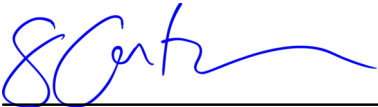
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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress




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Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress



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Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



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Emily Randall  
Member of Congress



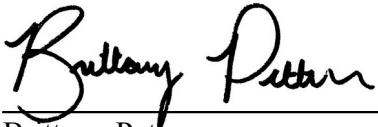
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Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress



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Susie Lee  
Member of Congress



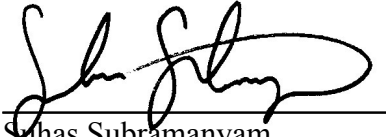
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Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress



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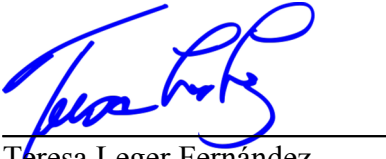
Luz M. Rivas  
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Suhas Subramanyam  
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



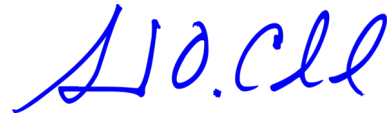
Teresa Leger Fernández  
Member of Congress



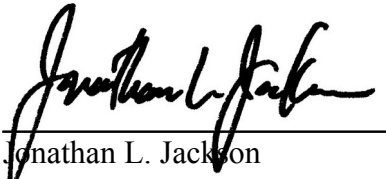
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress



Richard E. Neal  
Member of Congress



Wesley Bell  
Member of Congress



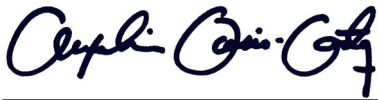
Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



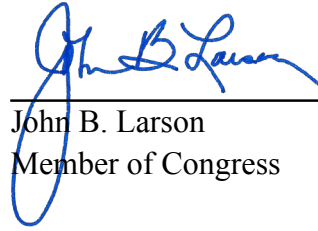
Sam T. Liccardo  
Member of Congress



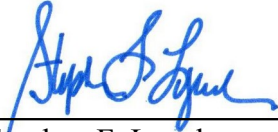
Robert J. Menendez  
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Member of Congress



John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



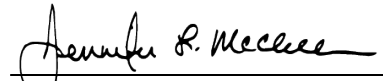
Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



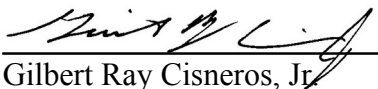
Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress



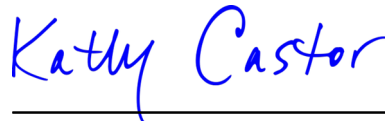
Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



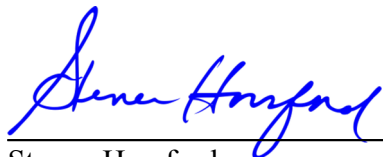
Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress



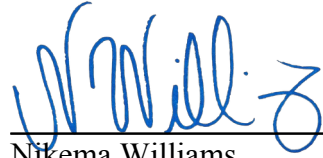
Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



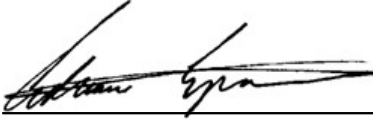
Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



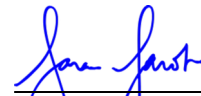
Adriano Espaillat  
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Nanette Diaz Barragán  
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Nellie Pou  
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Sara Jacobs  
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Sarah McBride  
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