
SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING UNITED STATES CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES TO IMMEDIATELY RESUME BIOMETRIC INTAKE AND INTERVIEWS ON THE COUNTIES OF HAWAII, MAUI, AND KAUAI.

1 WHEREAS, Hawaii is among the top five states with the
2 highest share of immigrants in their population; and

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4 WHEREAS, approximately 74,000 immigrants reside on the
5 neighbor islands; and

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7 WHEREAS, approximately 34,000 immigrants on the neighbor
8 islands are not naturalized United States citizens and must
9 undergo immigration processes adjudicated by United States
10 Citizenship and Immigration Services; and

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12 WHEREAS, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
13 terminated quarterly interview services to the neighbor islands
14 in 2007; and

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16 WHEREAS, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
17 terminated quarterly biometric intake to the neighbor islands in
18 2009; and

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20 WHEREAS, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
21 only performs basic immigration services, such as mandatory
22 interviews and biometric intake, in Honolulu; and

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24 WHEREAS, immigrants on the neighbor islands do not have
25 equal access to the immigration process as immigrants who reside
26 on Oahu; and

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28 WHEREAS, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
29 gives only one week's advance notice of scheduled biometric
30 intake or interviews on Oahu, and rescheduling can take up to
31 three months; and



1 WHEREAS, fees related to immigration applications are steep
2 and difficult to manage for many newcomers; and
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4 WHEREAS, the cost of roundtrip air travel to Honolulu
5 presents an additional substantial barrier to the immigration
6 process, and the lowest airfare rates are available thirty days
7 in advance; and
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9 WHEREAS, immigrants who have not yet naturalized are more
10 likely to be one hundred percent below the poverty level than
11 naturalized immigrants; and
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13 WHEREAS, the majority of immigrants in Hawaii are women,
14 and foreign-born women who are naturalized citizens earn
15 approximately \$8,500 more per year than foreign-born women who
16 have not yet naturalized; and
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18 WHEREAS, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
19 now has a greater ability to conduct mobile biometric intake on
20 neighbor islands because of improvements in technology since the
21 routes were discontinued in 2009; and
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23 WHEREAS, limited exceptions and travel waivers for those
24 physically unable to travel to Honolulu do not provide
25 meaningful access to the immigration process for the majority of
26 neighbor island immigrants; and
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28 WHEREAS, social service providers on the neighbor islands
29 report that the termination of United States Citizenship and
30 Immigration Services mobile routes to the neighbor islands has
31 resulted in immigrant clients not renewing their green cards
32 because it is too expensive to travel to Honolulu; and
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34 WHEREAS, the lack of basic immigration services on all
35 islands directly undermines the White House Task Force on New
36 Americans and new programs that encourage legal permanent
37 residents in Hawaii to apply for citizenship; and
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39 WHEREAS, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
40 is unwilling to contract biometric intake and interviews to a
41 third party, such as a law enforcement agency or private
42 government contractor; and



1
2 WHEREAS, the Hawai'i Coalition for Immigration Rights, which
3 represents over seventy nonprofit and legal organizations that
4 directly serve immigrants in Hawaii, has been campaigning for
5 the resumption of mobile interviews and biometric intake for
6 over two years; and

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8 WHEREAS, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
9 has an obligation to provide a feasible process to all
10 immigrants and migrants; now, therefore,

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12 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
13 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2016,
14 that the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services is
15 urged to immediately resume mobile biometric intake and
16 interviews to the counties of Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai; and

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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
19 Resolution be transmitted to the Field Office Director for the
20 Honolulu Field Office of the United States Citizenship and
21 Immigration Services.

