



July 15, 2010

# Executive Summary

## Quarterly Stakeholder Meeting with Director Mayorkas

### Background

On June 9, 2010, Director Mayorkas hosted a quarterly meeting with stakeholders. This meeting focused exclusively on the proposed federal rule that would adjust fees for immigration benefit applications and petitions. The proposed rule would increase overall fees by a weighted average of about 10 percent, but would not increase the fee for the naturalization application. The proposed fee structure would establish three new fees, including a fee for regional center designations under the Immigrant Investor Pilot Program, a fee for individuals seeking civil surgeon designation and a fee to recover USCIS' cost of processing immigrant visas granted by the Department of State. The proposed fee structure also reduces fees for certain individual applications and petitions as a result of lower processing costs.

Director Mayorkas explained that USCIS understands the effect of a fee increase on many of the communities we serve, especially in these economically challenging times, and noted that the Agency has worked hard to minimize the size of the proposed fee increase through budget cuts and other measures. In addition, Director Mayorkas informed stakeholders that USCIS recognizes the unique importance of naturalization, and therefore, has proposed that the naturalization application fee not be increased.

Stakeholders are encouraged to submit formal comments on the proposed rule, which is available at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). The comment period ends July 26, 2010.

### Principal Themes

- **Budget cuts**

USCIS has made \$160 million in budget cuts including reducing travel and improving utilization of refurbished information technology. These cuts also include staffing adjustments. Where there has been attrition in the Agency, vacancies have not been filled. There are corresponding reductions that then flow from not hiring new staff, such as reduced training costs. In addition, USCIS has sought greater appropriations for fiscal year 2011.

- **Level of Service**

USCIS has met or exceeded certain goals for processing times without seeing a reduction in the level of service. Director Mayorkas also noted that the Service is reviewing and evaluating other areas of concern identified by stakeholders, such as consistency in adjudications and processing times at the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO).

- **Fee Waivers**

Several stakeholders inquired about the availability of a fee waiver form and corresponding guidance. Director Mayorkas indicated that the form and guidance are in the final stages.

- **Reduced Fees**

The proposed rule reduces fees for five individual applications and petitions as a result of lower processing costs: Petition for Alien Fiancé (Form I-129F); Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status (Form I-539); Application to Adjust Status from Temporary to Permanent Resident (Form I-698); Application for Family Unity Benefits (Form I-817); and Application for Replacement Naturalization/Citizenship Document (Form N-565).

## **Next Steps**

USCIS encourages formal comments on the proposed rule through [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). The comment period ends July 26, 2010. After the 45-day public comment period ends, USCIS will analyze the comments and publish a final rule. The Agency aims to publish the final rule by the end of the fiscal year.

## **Additional Resources**

Additional information on the proposed rule is available from the following resources:

- [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov)
- [USCIS News Release](#)
- [Proposed Fee Rule Questions and Answers](#)
- [Proposed Fee Rule Fact Sheet](#)