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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025  
<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

July 21, 2020

The Honorable Chad F. Wolf  
Acting Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Joseph Edlow  
Deputy Director for Policy  
U.S Citizen and Immigration Services  
20 Massachusetts Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Secretary Wolf and Deputy Director Edlow:

We write to you today about the fact that United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) currently projects to end the fiscal year with a surplus and a sufficient balance to pay its employees for the remainder of the fiscal year. We ask that you take immediate action to save USCIS employees from unnecessary furloughs.

A surplus is certainly in stark contrast to the revenue forecast provided to Congress earlier this year that indicated a \$571 million deficit for FY 2020. Yet, despite this welcome reversal in revenue estimates, USCIS has perplexingly chosen to proceed with furloughs of over 13,000 federal employees. During this pandemic with record unemployment, needlessly forcing these hardworking Americans into unemployment will crush the morale of the workforce and put an untold number of families into unnecessary financial distress.

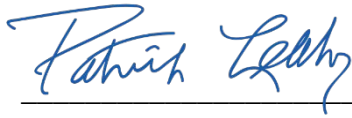
With regard to your projected deficit for FY 2021, we are committed to addressing this issue in the next coronavirus supplemental so that USCIS can continue accomplishing its missions without a furlough.

Now that USCIS is no longer projecting a deficit for FY 2020, you must not sit by as thousands of American jobs are on the line, particularly during a time of unprecedented unemployment. We hope you will do everything in your power to ensure that the hardworking Americans carrying out the critical mission of USCIS do not go without a paycheck this fiscal year.

It is not just these employees and their families that will be impacted by your decision to furlough them – thousands of United States Citizens, employers, and students rely on USCIS work, including members of the military. The loss of these valuable jobs will also cause hardship to the communities where these federal workers live and work – communities already struggling with the pandemic.

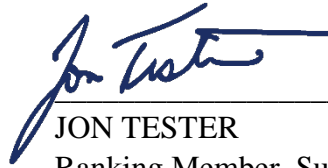
Please take action today.

Sincerely,



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PATRICK LEAHY  
Vice Chairman



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JON TESTER  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee  
on Homeland Security



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

August 17, 2020

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Vice Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Vice Chairman Leahy:

Thank you for your July 21, 2020 letter to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Acting Secretary Wolf asked that I respond on his behalf.

Due to recent assurances from you and other members of Congress that you are working to provide U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) with emergency funding, we have delayed the effective date of the administrative furlough from August 3, 2020 until August 30, 2020 to allow Congress more time to act.

We were able to provide this flexibility because our daily incoming revenue and receipts have improved, as demonstrated in the bi-weekly revenue reports that we have provided to the House and Senate Appropriations Committee staff since late May. Despite this recent uptick in receipts, we still require funding from Congress to maintain operations into fiscal year 2021.

There remains uncertainty in forecasting revenue for the next month, quarter, and year. This situation is unprecedented for USCIS. Unlike an appropriated agency, a fee-funded agency such as USCIS must have sufficient funds remaining at the end of the fiscal year to begin and sustain operations for the next fiscal year. This necessary carryover is not a financial surplus, but is rather projected carryover funds that are required to initiate and maintain operations for the next fiscal year.

This continues to be a difficult and uncertain time for our workforce. We trust that this delay will allow sufficient time for Congress to provide the funding that USCIS must have to cancel the administrative furlough altogether.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. I look forward to working with you and other members of Congress on this critical matter. Ranking Member

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Page 2

Tester will receive a separate, identical response. Should you require any additional assistance, please have your staff contact the USCIS Office of Legislative Affairs at (202) 272-1940.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' and 'E' followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Joseph Edlow  
Deputy Director for Policy