



AMERICA THRIVES WHEN IMMIGRANTS INTEGRATE AND NATURALIZE

With the proper tools and knowledge, immigrants can help our country achieve great things.

THE ECONOMY

Immigrants who improve their English language skills can triple their earnings, or better.

- On average, foreign-born workers who cannot speak English earn about \$22,000 a year.
- Foreign-born workers who speak English very well earn an average of about \$59,000 a year.

Naturalized citizens earn more than their immigrant counterparts.

- The average annual income of employed naturalized citizens is about 44% higher than the average annual income of working noncitizens.

Immigrants' increased earnings contribute to the economic success of all who participate in our economy.

- If 7.5 million immigrants naturalized within the next 5 years, our nation's GDP would increase by an estimated \$37-52 billion within the next 10 years.

THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Naturalized citizens are productive members of our communities and actively participate in our democracy.

- Latino and Asian American naturalized citizens vote at notably higher rates than their U.S.-born counterparts.
- Foreign-born residents have a lower incarceration rate than native-born Americans and their presence is associated with safer communities.
- Naturalized citizens safeguard our security as military service members, elected officials, and professionals occupying roles reserved for American citizens.

OUR GOVERNMENT SHOULD DO MORE TO INTEGRATE NEW AMERICANS

Approximately 8.6 million lawful permanent residents are eligible to apply for naturalization.

- A majority – about 4.4 million – of them are Latino. Most of these individuals aspire to be U.S. citizens.

However, barriers to naturalization are persistent, and are becoming worse, including:

- High demand for accessible, affordable English and civics courses, which has resulted in long waiting lists and crowded classes.
- Rising costs of applying for citizenship and securing legal assistance where needed. In 2016, the fee for applying for naturalization increased from \$680 to \$725. This fee does not include the expenses of gathering documents and information needed to apply, nor of securing legal assistance with the application process.
- Growing application backlogs and wait times – the average processing time for an application for naturalization ballooned from 5.8 months in FY15 to 10.3 months in FY17.

CONGRESS MUST PROACTIVELY SUPPORT ACCESS TO NATURALIZATION AND INTEGRATION OPPORTUNITIES

Members of Congress should hold USCIS accountable for managing resources efficiently.

- Unfortunately, during FY18, USCIS's budget increased by 6% and overall application receipts declined by 13%, yet average case processing times still increased by 19%.

Members of Congress should co-sponsor the Citizenship Affordability Act, HR 3323/S 1862 (116th Congress).