

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 16, 2017

The Honorable Elaine C. Duke
Acting Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Nebraska Avenue Complex
3801 Nebraska Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20528

The Honorable L. Francis J. Cissna
Director of U.S. Citizenship and
Immigration Services
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Headquarters Building 20 Massachusetts
Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20008

Dear Acting Director Duke and Director Cissna:

We write to request that you provide a temporary blanket waiver of fees for individuals applying to replace vital immigration and naturalization documents lost, damaged, or destroyed as a result of recent California wildfires.

In recent weeks, wildfires displaced 100,000 Californians, burned more than 245,000 acres of land, and destroyed 8,900 homes and structures. Forty-three people were killed. Now that the fires are contained, recovery efforts are underway and many Californians must reconstruct their entire lives. This, as you can imagine, is emotionally taxing and logistically overwhelming.

As a result of these wildfires, constituents have contacted our offices about replacing lost, damaged or destroyed immigration documents. Under current United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) policy, one can file an individual application for an income-based fee waiver to replace such documents.

This process requires wildfire-affected Californians to individually submit a lengthy form and extensive supporting documentation to demonstrate their inability to pay expensive replacement fees for vital immigration and citizenship documents. For example, the fee for replacing a green card is \$540 and the fee for replacing an employment authorization document is \$495. We do not believe this is a sufficient solution for Californians devastated by this natural disaster. Many of those affected are facing financial stress and may not be eligible for the individual waiver. Those who are eligible may face challenges to supply necessary supporting documentation.

To lessen the burden on Californians seeking to rebuild their lives, we respectfully request that you exercise your authority to provide a temporary blanket fee waiver for the replacement of USCIS documents for residents of the nine impacted counties who declare under

a penalty of perjury that their documents were lost, damaged, or destroyed because of the wildfires.¹

We appreciate your agency's support to assist Californians during this difficult time. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



KAMALA D. HARRIS
United States Senator



DIANNE FEINSTEIN
United States Senator

¹ 8 C.F.R. § 103.7 (2017)