

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 23, 2019

The Honorable L. Francis Cissna  
Director  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
20 Massachusetts Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20529

Dear Director Cissna:

We write to express our concerns regarding current processing delays for immigration benefits at U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). In Nevada, one in five residents is an immigrant. As workers, taxpayers, and business owners, immigrants are an invaluable part of Nevada's diverse and thriving communities. These delays affect the social and economic welfare of all of our residents.

Current wait times have reached an unacceptable length. The average processing time for green card applications (I-485 petitions) in the Las Vegas and Reno field offices is between 11 to 27 months, up to twice as long as the average national wait time.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, the Reno and Las Vegas field offices can see processing times of 10 to 20 months for applications for naturalization (N-400), also up to double the national average wait time.<sup>2</sup>

Processing delays have significant consequences for individuals, families, and businesses. The social and economic costs of inconsistent and undependable immigration processes are far too high, and those who are trying their best to work within the parameters of our immigration system should not be met with undue stress and burden.

In light of the USCIS delays in the Reno and Las Vegas field offices and the impact they have on all Nevadans, we request answers to the following questions:

1. What are the most frequently submitted applications by Nevadans and what are the current corresponding wait times for each of these applications?
  - a. Please describe the factors that have led the Reno and Las Vegas field offices to experience delays in processing times that are twice the national average.

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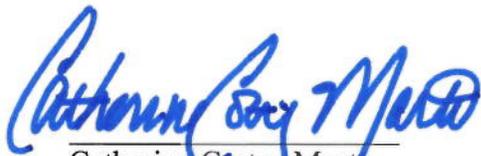
<sup>1</sup> USCIS Case Processing Times for employment-based adjustment applications, I-485 at Las Vegas and Reno, NV. Accessed on May 16, 2016 at <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>. See also, USCIS Historical National Average Processing Time for All USCIS Offices at <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/historic-pt>

<sup>2</sup> USCIS Case Processing Times for employment-based adjustment applications, N-400 at Las Vegas and Reno, NV. Accessed on May 16, 2016 at <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/>. See also, USCIS Historical National Average Processing Time for All USCIS Offices at <https://egov.uscis.gov/processing-times/historic-pt>

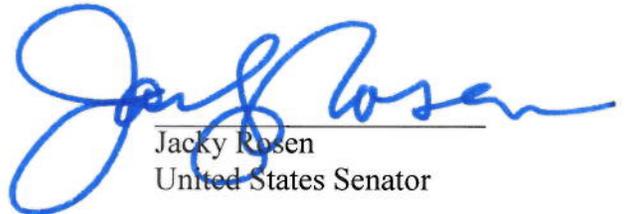
2. What steps are being taken to address delays at both USCIS Service Centers and USCIS Field Offices?
3. In regard to expanding the Information Services Modernization Program, what steps is USCIS taking to ensure that these online services are accessible to as many communities as possible, including individuals facing language barriers and those without reliable internet access?
  - a. If USCIS determines that a constituent will need in-person assistance, how many attempts does an officer make to contact the individual?
4. Do you plan to hire additional staff at the Reno or Las Vegas field offices to address the backlog?
  - a. If there are any specific barriers that have resulted in delays in the hiring process, please provide your plan to address those barriers.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. It is a priority for us that these issues are addressed and we look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator