



AMERICAN IMMIGRATION LAW FOUNDATION

June 2, 2004

Kevin Rooney
Director, Executive Office for Immigration Review
5107 Leesburg Pike, Suite 2400
Falls Church, VA 22041

Dear Mr. Rooney:

We recently heard that the Executive Office for Immigration Review is proposing to begin a "national video immigration court" to be housed at the EOIR's headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia. We understand that you expect that all of these hearings, including merits hearings, will be conducted by video-conference and that there are no provisions for attorneys, respondents, or witnesses to appear before these immigration judges. EOIR has not issued any information to the public about this proposal and what we have heard has been in the nature of rumors. We also understand that EOIR does not intend to propose this change in the Federal Register or to give an opportunity for interested or affected people to comment before this new plan is implemented.

If true, this major and alarming development raises numerous serious concerns. As you know, our organizations have thousands of members and participating lawyers throughout the United States. Our members and/or our members' clients may be directly and negatively impacted by this national video court.

We respectfully request an urgent meeting with you, within two weeks of the date of this letter, to confirm whether these reports are true, to learn more details, and to express our concerns. We also hereby request that any such plan first be proposed in the Federal Register with full opportunity for comment, in compliance with the Administrative Procedures Act and other pertinent authority.

Thank you.



Nadine K. Wettstein
Director, Legal Action Center
American Immigration Law Foundation
and on behalf of
American Immigration Lawyers Association
Capital Area Immigrants' Rights (CAIR) Coalition
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.
Just Neighbors