



AMERICAN
IMMIGRATION
LAWYERS
ASSOCIATION

August 10, 2021

Ms. Ur Mendoza Jaddou
Director
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
5900 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, Maryland 20588

Via Email: Ur.M.Jaddou@uscis.dhs.gov

Dear Ms. Jaddou:

Congratulations on your confirmation as the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). In recognition of this appointment, the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to this important position. We would also like to request an introductory meeting to hear about your vision for USCIS and to share our recommendations for the future of immigration and specifically on USCIS customer service and public engagement, which are outlined in our report, [A Vision for America as a Welcoming Nation](#) and our policy brief, [Walled Off: How USCIS Has Closed Its Doors on Customers and Strayed from Its Statutory Customer Service Mission](#).

In the past, AILA and USCIS have had good working relations to identify and resolve systematic problems that hamper USCIS's ability to provide quality customer service to the millions of applicants, petitioners, and beneficiaries that seek your services each year. While relations with AILA chilled during the previous administration, AILA and your staff continued to work together to address and resolve issues of mutual interest, such as the initial roll out of the H-1B registration system, as well as resolving mail delivery and erroneous rejections of various types of forms. Since the Biden Administration has taken office, we have welcomed more robust engagement with USCIS to resolve problematic case trends and policy issues.

As you know, AILA is a bar association of more than 15,000 attorneys and law professors practicing and teaching in the field of immigration and nationality law. Our mission includes the advancement of the law pertaining to immigration and nationality and the facilitation of justice in the field. AILA members regularly advise and represent businesses, U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents, and foreign nationals regarding the application and interpretation of U.S. immigration laws. Our members represent law firms, universities, client-service organizations, and non-profit advocacy groups. With diverse practices that touch upon all aspects of immigration and naturalization law (family, employment, humanitarian), AILA members are regularly in contact with USCIS field offices, asylum offices, and service centers in the course of representing their clients.

We share mutual interests in ensuring that the legal immigration system is managed in a way that honors our heritage as a [nation of welcome](#) and that the legal immigration system operates [effectively and efficiently](#). We also share the belief that USCIS must be more transparent and accountable to the public by holding meaningful engagement on a wide variety of issues, such as customer service, efficiency and consistency in adjudications, and accessibility for case redress. A dialogue with AILA and USCIS can

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help further your objectives as USCIS Director. As lawyers representing clients in front of USCIS daily, we have unique insight on the practical consequences of complex legal and policy matters that are often unforeseen when new policies and procedures are implemented.

Considering our mutual interest in ensuring an effective and efficient legal immigration system, we respectfully request a meeting with you at your earliest convenience to introduce ourselves and to hear from you with respect to your vision for the agency. To arrange a date and time, or if you would like more information, please contact Shev Dalal-Dheini, Director of Government Relations, at (202) 507-7621 or by e-mail at sdalal-dheini@aila.org.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Ben Johnson
Executive Director
American Immigration Lawyers Association

CC: Felicia Escobar Carillo, Chief of Staff

Cara Selby, Acting Associate Director External Affairs Directorate

Carlos Munoz-Acevedo, Chief of Public Engagement