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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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Chief Executive Officer

Fesia A. Davenport

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

ADOPTED

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

December 17, 2024

27 December 17, 2024

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

EDWARD YEN
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Supervisors:

**2025-2026 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM FOR THE 119TH CONGRESSIONAL SESSION
(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS AFFECTED)
(3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

This letter includes the County's Federal Legislative Platform (Platform) for the 119th Congressional Session (2025-26 Federal Legislative Session), which was developed in coordination with the Board of Supervisors' (Board) offices and County departments. It also includes the 2025 federal legislative outlook, based on available information at this time; and outlines the County's major federal legislative priorities that will be pursued based on this outlook. Unless otherwise directed by the Board, the County's advocacy efforts on these priorities and other legislative proposals and budgetary matters affecting the County will be pursued, consistent with Board-adopted legislative policies.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Approve the enclosed policies and priorities for the 2025-2026 Federal Legislative Platform (Enclosure).
2. Direct the Chief Executive Office's Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations (CEO-LAIR) Branch to continue to collaborate with the Board and County departments to engage with the Administration, members of Congress to include the County's Legislative delegation, federal agencies, other counties and local governments, and interest groups to advance these policies and priorities.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Updating the Federal Legislative Platform (Platform)

In 2023, the Platform (formerly titled Federal Legislative Agenda) underwent a strategic restructuring aimed at advancing the Board and the County's legislative and policy priorities in the current dynamic legislative environment. Building off the 2023 restructured Platform, the policy statements listed in the enclosure are designed to maximize federal support and revenue for County-provided services, increase the County's flexibility to serve and protect its residents, minimize the adverse impact of federal policies on the County, and promote the well-being of the State and County.

CEO-LAIR coordinated with Board offices and County departments to develop comprehensive policy statements that will serve as guiding principles and a clear roadmap for effective advocacy-related activities at the federal level on key policy, programmatic, and budgetary matters. The Platform will help enable a more targeted and coordinated advocacy program, ultimately leading to more impactful outcomes in the federal legislative process. The Platform also allows CEO-LAIR to have greater flexibility to engage on matters with expediency that impact the County's budget and operations. The updated policy statements represent ongoing and emerging priority programs and issues for which CEO-LAIR is seeking the Board's approval to guide advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C.

County Legislative Policy Priorities

As described in the enclosure, unless otherwise directed by the Board, Los Angeles County's advocacy efforts in 2025-26 will primarily concentrate on: homelessness, housing, protecting the County's digital inclusion and emerging technologies; economic and workforce development; environment and sustainability; equity; general government; health, public health, and behavioral health; human services; justice, public safety, and emergency management; public infrastructure; and support for immigrants.

Upon the Board's approval, the CEO will publish the Platform policy statements on our public website.

Legislative Outlook

The first session of the 119th Congress will begin on January 3, 2025. The current Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025 Continuing Resolution (H.R. 9747) authorizing government spending expires on December 20, 2024, and will need to be extended. Congress could consider an "omnibus" appropriations bill that would combine the 12 unfinished appropriations bills into one package, but this may be less likely with Republicans gaining control of the White House and Congress as a result of the November 2024 election. With Republicans retaining the majority in the House, Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) is expected to support extending the current Continuing Resolution to March 2025.

Beyond appropriations, Congress will have to take several significant actions in the coming months. The federal debt ceiling was suspended in mid-2023 and that suspension expires on January 1, 2025. This suspension will need to be extended or the debt ceiling could be raised beyond the current estimated national debt of \$35.9 trillion. In addition, the Farm Bill (H.R. 8467), which includes funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), will need to be reauthorized or extended before the end of the year, with the likely outcome being a short-term extension of current programs. Congress will also need to replenish the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Disaster Relief Fund (DRF) after a series of recent natural disasters. Congress did provide

\$20 billion to the DRF prior to October 2024, but because of the magnitude of these storm events additional funding will be needed.

Additionally, the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act will expire on December 31, 2025. Without action by Congress, changes such as an increase in the standard deduction, an increase in the child tax credit, and corporate tax reductions will revert to pre-2017 levels. To address this, Congress is expected to put together a budget reconciliation measure as a vehicle for a new tax reform package. An attempt to restore the full State and Local Tax (SALT) deduction or increase the cap on SALT deductions may also be considered. A reconciliation package could also consider other issues that have a nexus to federal spending or revenues.

Of significance to California and the County, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is reviewing the State of California's Medicaid Section 1115 Demonstration application to increase access to and improve behavioral health services for Medi-Cal members statewide, known as the Behavioral Health Community-Based Organized Networks of Equitable Care and Treatment. With the impending Presidential transition, the County is advocating for CMS to approve the demonstration while the Biden administration is still in office.

In spite of the challenges referenced, the County was able to advance key components of its federal priorities with funding for most programs being maintained or increased in the current fiscal year. The County spearheaded advocacy efforts with the Department of Treasury to update the Interim Final Rule (IFR) governing COVID-19 relief fund spending which allowed the Board-adopted expenditure plan of the County's \$1.949 billion allocation to proceed. The County also successfully advocated for the defeat of Senate Joint Resolution 57 which, if approved, would have repealed the IFR and subjected the Board-adopted plan to additional scrutiny. The County was also awarded over \$29 million by the Department of Transportation for its Safer Steps for L.A. County Pedestrians project, which augments the Department of Public Work's Vision Zero Action Plan to implement pedestrian safety improvements at 77 intersections in areas with a high level of pedestrian activity. In addition to securing significant resources for critical homeless prevention and affordable housing, the County was successful in advocating for vital policy changes that would remove barriers to housing for Veterans unable to access homeless assistance due to service-connected disability benefits.

Former Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) stepped down in early November and will be replaced by Senator John Thune (R-SD). With Republicans assuming control of the Senate in 2025, the chamber will consist of 53 Republicans, 46 Democrats, and 1 Independent. The new Majority Leader will set the agenda in the chamber and interface with the White House to support the new Administration's priorities, including confirming Cabinet members and nominees for senior executive branch positions for President-elect Donald Trump.

The make-up of the House of Representatives next year is still being determined. The current House composition is 220 Republicans and 212 Democrats with three vacancies. While a few House races remain undecided, the new make-up of the House is expected to be 221 Republicans and 214 Democrats. For Republicans, all members of the current leadership team are seeking their current positions. On the Democratic side, the current leadership team under Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) is expected to remain in place.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The recommended actions support North Star 3 - Realizing Tomorrow's Government Today, Focus Area Goal G - Internal Controls and Processes. The policies in the Federal Legislative Platform will enable the County to proactively advocate on legislation and in support of federal resources and revenues for the County.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The proposed policies would allow this Office to provide timely, effective, and appropriate advocacy on federal legislative, policy, and budgetary proposals that could impact the County's fiscal health.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

None.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

None.

CONCLUSION

The recommended policies and priorities are submitted for the Board's consideration as guiding principles in the Federal Legislative Platform for the 119th Congression Session (2025-2026 Calendar Year).

Respectfully submitted,



FESIA A. DAVENPORT
Chief Executive Officer

FAD:JMN:SA
AM:LAIR:dr

Enclosures

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM 2025-2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

INTRODUCTION

With over 10 million people residing within its borders, Los Angeles County (County) is the most populous county in the United States. With a workforce of nearly 100,000, the Board of Supervisors (Board), both directly and through the Chief Executive Officer, provides services on a level comparable to or exceeding those of most states in the country. In addition, the County contributes a quarter of California's gross state product and approximately one-quarter of all residents in California live in the County.

Given the priorities and needs of County residents, businesses, and visitors, the County's advocacy efforts in 2025-2026 will concentrate on a host of critical issues that, together, define a thoughtful, progressive, and ambitious approach to governance and responsibility.

MECHANISMS FOR ADVOCACY

The Chief Executive Office – Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations Branch (CEO-LAIR) will use the Federal Legislative Platform as the benchmark to take advocacy positions on legislative, policy, and budgetary proposals that directly impact the County, its programs, operations, resources, budget, and most importantly its residents. These policies, as approved by the Board, will be updated each legislative session to address the County's evolving priorities and emerging issues.

As urgent matters arise throughout the legislative session that pose a substantial concern to the County's operations and budget, to include issues that are not addressed by the Federal Legislative Platform and Federal Legislative Priorities, the Chief Executive Officer will advocate to express the County's concerns.

KEY FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The County will support proposals that:

- Maximize federal revenues;
- Provide full funding for the costs of federal programs;
- Seek funding for programs where service needs have outpaced stagnant or slow growing revenues;
- Ensure an equitable allocation of federal funding and minimize the adverse impact of federal actions; and
- Achieve greater flexibility over the use of federal funds.

The County will oppose proposals that:

- Shift programs unless control is also shifted and federal funding is guaranteed;
- Create new unfunded mandates unless they promote a higher priority; and
- Pose a potential threat to the County's fiscal stability or operations.

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

On behalf of the County, CEO-LAIR will pursue legislative and budgetary advocacy to enhance the quality of life for the people who live in, work in, and visit the County. The County will engage in the legislative process according to the following policies:

Digital Inclusion and Emerging Technologies

In the County, areas where more than 20 percent of households lack broadband service are largely the same areas where the household income is less than \$50,000 a year, and where people of color are more likely to live. The County will support federal legislation and policies that provide funding for the development and expansion of broadband infrastructure and reliable, affordable networks to bridge the digital divide, provide connectivity and services, increase access to high-speed internet to benefit as many households as possible, and ensure digital inclusion, particularly in underserved communities.

To gain the public's trust and leverage Artificial Intelligence/Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) technology, it is imperative to ensure GenAI is developed and used ethically and responsibly. The County has established eight guiding principles for the responsible use of GenAI systems within the County: Human-Centered Design, Security & Safety, Privacy, Transparency, Equity, Accountability, Effectiveness, and Workforce Empowerment.

The County will support proposals that:

- Expand broadband infrastructure in historically underserved and rural communities.
- Use innovative, short-term and long-term strategies to provide free or low-cost high-speed internet and related devices to disadvantaged communities.
- Expand and modernize Wi-Fi at County and other public facilities to help close the digital divide for residents in disadvantaged and broadband deficient communities.
- Increase digital literacy and consumer education for high-speed internet service options.

Economic and Workforce Development

The County is strategically investing in support for entrepreneurs, small businesses, and innovative and equitable economic and workforce development programs in high growth and emerging industry sectors that create a pipeline to well-paying jobs. The County remains committed to building an inclusive and sustainable regional economy, stimulating quality job growth, and helping lift economically disadvantaged residents out of poverty and into self-sufficiency.

The County will support proposals that:

- Reauthorize and increase funding for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs and other employment initiatives, and provide local agencies with administrative flexibility to effectively meet the present and emerging needs of the County's diverse workforce.
- Enhance funding for programs and initiatives that support community and economic development, support high-growth and emerging industries in the Los Angeles region such as the creative economy, and accelerate the transition to a green economy.
- Reduce barriers to employment, address racial and gender disparities in employment outcomes, encourage diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and increase opportunities for workers and businesses with the highest employment needs.
- Support youth employment, entrepreneurship, and career pathways in high-growth industries.

- Increase economic resiliency through outreach and assistance for workers, independent and small businesses, and industries impacted by natural or man-made disasters, and other economic disruptions.
- Create alignment across federal safety net, public workforce and economic development agencies, and programs to support prevention and promotion outcomes.

Environment and Sustainability

Environmental hazards compounded by the impacts of climate change continue to affect vital infrastructure and the daily lives of the residents of the County. The County supports policies and investments that transform the energy, water, food, transportation, and waste systems; help overcome past inequities that have resulted in disproportionate pollution burdens and health outcomes for communities of color; help local businesses, organizations, and residents in disadvantaged communities adapt to climate change; and advance racial and gender equity. To address environmental issues and make this a sustainable region, the County will advocate for proposals that promote sustainable infrastructure, advance environmental justice, and invest in climate resiliency.

The County will support proposals that:

- Promote climate resiliency, the Green Transition, and sustainability in programs, projects, energy production, policy implementation methods, technologies, waste producer responsibility, and jobs.
- Improve access to clean water, enhancing water quality, local water supply, sustainable water infrastructure, and conservation.
- Remediate, restore, increase, and protect natural resource areas, natural environments, and spaces with cultural or recreational value.
- Fund or promote projects or proposals that mitigate the effects of climate change, reduce environmental pollutants, improve air quality, reduce reliance on source pollutants, strengthen natural spaces within communities, and respond to extreme heat-related impacts, and address gateway community needs.
- Incorporate Board-adopted plans (e.g., “Our County” Sustainability Plan, Park Needs Assessment Plus (PNA+) 30x30 Plan, LA County Water Plan) into programs, legislation, policies, and funding opportunities.

Equity

The County continues to advocate for policies that promote equitable outcomes for historically marginalized and underserved communities.

The County will support proposals that:

- Address and combat discrimination based on age, disability, disease status, gender identity, language, immigration status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.
- Address, correct and/or remedy past public policy which produced or sustained racial inequities.
- Address the gap between the legal needs of the most vulnerable populations and the resources available to ensure equitable access to justice.
- Affirmatively advance and/or provide resources to promote gender and racial equity.
- Affirmatively advance and/or provide resources to prioritize and effectively support the most disadvantaged geographies and populations.

General Government

The County will advocate for policies to ensure the effective, transparent, and equitable delivery of various services that affect the lives of the County's diverse population. General government policies include matters related, but not limited to: the fiscal strength of the County; elections and voting; agriculture, weights, and measures; animal care and control; arts, culture, and education; cannabis and other business permitting and regulation; human resources, including labor relations, benefits, safety, and risk management; immigration; libraries and library services; public access; worker protections; and veterans' issues.

The County will support proposals that:

- Provide funding to state and local governments to upgrade their voting equipment to ensure all eligible citizens have full access to the voter registration process and/or affirm the intent of the National Voter Registration Act.
- Promote accurate, unbiased, and inclusive census counts and data collection to equitably allocate funds among states and localities and inform future redistricting processes.
- Protect consumers against fraud, scams, and unfair or deceptive business practices, and increase collaborative consumer protection and the financial well-being and resiliency of residents through education and counseling programs, financial literacy, wealth-building opportunities, and loss mitigation.
- Provide essential assistance to those who have served in our armed forces.
- Promote improved federal worker protections and increased collaboration with local agencies on awareness and enforcement efforts that combat wage theft, labor trafficking, and other abuses of labor.
- Promote the establishment of an equitable and sustainable cannabis market by enhancing access to banking and financial resources, safer cannabis products, increased resources for local public health, equity and consumer protection programs, and tools to discourage the proliferation of unlicensed cannabis businesses.
- Provide funding to support critical County public services.
- Automate or expedite employment authorization renewals for immigrant and nonimmigrant beneficiaries, including for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients.

Health, Public Health, and Behavioral Health

The health and well-being of the County's diverse communities, particularly among disproportionately burdened communities and communities of color, are critically important for preventing physical and behavioral health conditions, and for reducing health disparities across the region. Increasing access to care, enhancing delivery systems, providing equitable and critical public health services that protect and promote health among individuals and communities, and addressing the growing need for prevention, diagnostic, and treatment services for individuals with behavioral and other health conditions are all vital elements for achieving improved health outcomes in the County.

The County supports proposals to:

- Enhance and reform Medicaid financing and other federal payments for health safety-net providers, including through programs such as disproportionate share hospital payments, federally-granted Medicaid waivers, federally-supported quality and performance incentive programs, as well as amend the Medicaid inmate payment exclusion, and repeal the Medicaid Institutions for Mental Diseases (IMD) payment exclusion.

- Increase and sustain flexible funding for safety net hospitals, health clinics, and public health infrastructure, including workforce, that serve disadvantaged communities.
- Prevent or reduce consumers' medical debt and associated negative outcomes.
- Increase access to and utilization of recommended adult immunizations, including through the establishment of a Federal Vaccines for Adults program.
- Effectively plan for and respond to current and future public health emergencies, emerging disease threats, epidemic and other disasters, and gun and domestic violence prevention efforts.
- Increase and sustain funding supporting equitable access to substance use disorder (SUD) services and reduce legislative and regulatory barriers to accessing SUD services.
- Enhance local behavioral health crisis response infrastructure, including providing Medicaid reimbursement for these services and support increased diversity in the behavioral health workforce by expanding the behavioral health workforce pipeline and expanding public-sector workforce incentive programs to recruit qualified workers, including support for substance use disorder counselors.
- Enforce parity laws and policies to ensure equal coverage for behavioral health treatment and medical care, including moving towards parity for reimbursement rates.
- Provide resources for critical services at all levels of care, including diagnostic, prevention, acute inpatient, outpatient, supportive care, and residential facilities.
- Enhance services and resources to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.

Housing and Homelessness

The County has one of the least affordable housing markets in the nation. The shortage of affordable housing acutely impacts low-income residents, families, and vulnerable populations, and challenges regional efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness. The County places a high priority on increasing access to affordable housing options by reducing barriers to housing production, supporting unit preservation, and protecting against residential displacement. The County also remains focused on transitioning residents who are experiencing homelessness into safe, stable, and permanent housing, and implementing effective strategies to reduce inflow into homelessness.

The County will support proposals that:

- Increase affordable housing production and preservation, residential landlord and tenant protections, and homeownership opportunities for low-to-moderate income and first-time homebuyers.
- Provide sufficient funding for federal rental subsidy programs and the maintenance, operation, and preservation of the County's public housing resources.
- Expand funding and administrative flexibility for federal programs and initiatives that support housing and community development.
- Increase housing resources and supportive services for Veterans experiencing homelessness and reduce barriers to access.
- Provide resources to prevent and reduce residential displacement and support local strategies to address homelessness.
- Promote the full and efficient use of federal housing resources by reducing administrative barriers, increasing owner incentives, and providing additional financial support to high-performing public housing authorities that prioritize homeless and other special needs populations.

Human Services

The County seeks to preserve and increase funding and resources, administrative and programmatic flexibilities, and accessibility to a wide range of human services programs serving low-income individuals, families, older adults, persons with disabilities, children in foster care and their families, transition-aged youth, pregnant people, childless adults, and victims of crime. The County strives to alleviate financial hardship, address food insecurity, provide affordable health care, promote the safety, well-being and permanency of families and children, prevent child and elderly abuse, exploitation and neglect, provide aging and disability services, connect parents and caregivers to provide child support services, and prevent, mitigate, and disrupt poverty, all while promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The County will support proposals that:

- Reauthorize, increase, and/or provide sufficient funding for human services programs, including but not limited to: the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant, SNAP; child welfare funding (e.g., Title IV B & E, Aid to Families with Dependent Children 1996 lookback); and local child support agencies to cover increased operational costs and to mitigate the impacts of flat funding to counties, and promote flexibility, efficiency, equity, and modernization within the child support program.
- Provide additional services and resources for customers, including asylees and refugees, and vulnerable populations.
- Address the surge in fraudulent skimming and theft of TANF and SNAP benefits on electronic benefits transfer (EBT) cards.
- Prevent the expansion of the definition of the term “public charge” for purposes of determining eligibility to public assistance programs.
- Support efforts to increase access to high-quality early care and education services provided by a qualified and well-compensated workforce.

Justice, Public Safety, and Emergency Management Systems

The County is committed to supporting meaningful reforms to justice and public safety systems in pursuit of the “Care First, Jails Last” vision to support rehabilitation and reintegration of those involved in the criminal legal system. Additionally, the County continues to support preemptive emergency management and response investments.

The County will support proposals that:

- Strengthen justice and public safety system transparency, reform policing standards, address police misconduct, or protect detainee rights and due process.
- Increase funding or flexibility to use federal health benefits for the physical and mental health of incarcerated individuals.
- Remove historic disparities and inequities in the juvenile and adult criminal legal systems, including the redirection of youth and adults from mass incarceration towards rehabilitative, health-focused, and care-first systems.
- Increase funding for and enhance resources for crime-impacted individuals and communities, and for youth and adults involved in the justice system, with an emphasis on care, development, alternatives to incarceration, community-based violence prevention, and community reintegration pathways.
- Expand resources and services for local emergency/disaster preparation, management, and operations, including disaster and climate hazard preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.
- Improve wildfire prevention and fire safety services, including, but not limited to, measures to increase financial assistance, training, and other resources for local response.

- Ensure accurate and fair distribution of benefits for justice-involved veterans.

Public Services and Infrastructure

The County will advocate for additional investments, streamlining of processes, and legislative actions from federal partners that would greatly assist the County to meet the changing needs of the region, meet enhanced mobility plans, and green investment goals. The County will continue to support infrastructure investments, procedural improvements, and the full delivery of funding authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act.

The County will support proposals that:

- Directly fund or provide capacity-building resources to enhance the ability of local governments to accelerate the delivery of key regional infrastructure projects and services.
- Reduce barriers to the participation of non-governmental organizations and small businesses in private-public partnerships and contracting opportunities.
- Accelerate and prioritize the development of infrastructure with multi-benefit outcomes, such as improved public service delivery and infrastructure efficacy, improved sustainability and decarbonization, benefits to disadvantaged communities, fulfilling equity goals, maintaining beneficial use of waterbodies, and ensuring a diverse public infrastructure workforce.
- Support alternative funding mechanisms and incentivize innovations and pilot programs for infrastructure and service delivery, such as construction, environmental services, water system management, and transportation development and goals.
- Ease and streamline procedures to work with federal partners, apply for and receive federal funding, and expend federal funding with more flexibility.
- Secure funding and resources to accelerate the deployment and maintenance of legacy public infrastructure that supports major international events (e.g., World Cup, Olympic Games, Paralympic Games), including enhancements to transportation systems, street safety and mobility services, as well as enhance public transit options.
- Expand the capacity and resources of local economic and workforce development agencies to prepare and meet the needs of upcoming global events in the region.

Support for Immigrants

The County strives to ensure that immigrants, from unaccompanied children and refugees to longtime County residents in removal proceedings, have the support and services they need to remain and thrive in the Los Angeles region. The County has taken action to advance policies that ensure all residents, regardless of immigration status, are treated humanely, afforded due process protections, provided access to counsel and necessary services without fear of immigration consequences, and given the opportunity to secure permanent immigration status.

The County will support proposals that:

- Provide federal resources to meet the needs of newly arrived migrants, including refugees and asylees, and existing immigrant populations in the jurisdictions where they settle.
- Expand immigrant access to federally funded programs and services and offer new immigration relief opportunities for undocumented individuals and immigrants who lack permanent resident status.

- Provide adequate funding for legal representation for indigent immigrants in immigration court proceedings, end civil incarceration of noncitizens for immigration proceedings, and protect people from inhumane detention conditions.
- Provide funding for legal representation and other support services for vulnerable immigrant groups, including, but not limited to, unaccompanied children and victims of domestic violence, human trafficking, labor exploitation, and other crimes.
- Increase federal resources to facilitate prompt adjudication of all cases by U.S. Citizenship Immigration Services.