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Res. No. 235

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Resolution calling on United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to quickly clear the backlog of I-765 applications for employment authorization.

By Council Members Brewer, Louis, Hanif, Hudson, Ung, Sanchez and Gutierrez

Whereas, Asylum seekers are arriving in sanctuary cities like New York in increasing numbers; and

Whereas, Individuals seeking asylum in the United States are required to obtain an employment authorization document (I-766) in order to work in the United States while their asylum claim is pending; and

Whereas, in order to obtain an I-766 employment authorization, asylum seekers must file an application for employment authorization (I-765); and

Whereas, Asylum seekers are ready and able to work and contribute to New York City's economy; and

Whereas, The United States Citizen and Immigration Service, pursuant to its own rules, is required to process employment authorization documents for asylum seekers within 30 days; and

Whereas, the COVID pandemic, lack of funding, and staffing vacancies at the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service have caused processing delays for 1-765 applications; and

Whereas, According to the USCIS's own data, processing times for I-765 applications in fiscal year 2002 took, on average, between 4.1 and 6.9 months depending on the basis for filing; and

Whereas, The extended processing times for I-765 applications have led to a large backlog of applications; and

Whereas, According to testimony given by the USCIS Director at an Congressional hearing in April 2022 there were 1.5 million pending work authorization applications; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York Calls on the United States Citizenship and

Immigration Services quickly clear the backlog of I-765 applications for employment authorization.

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3/5/24

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