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Res. No. 235

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, Gutierrez, Cabán and Rivera

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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