



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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By ESEC at 4:27 pm, Nov 14, 2022

October 13, 2022

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary
United States Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

We respectfully ask your help to let the Juneau Customs & Border Protection Office do biometric appointments for US Citizenship and Immigration Services. Currently, USCIS can't use fingerprinting and photos taken by the Juneau office, even though they are in the same federal department and use the same equipment.

This is a big deal for our region. Travel is expensive and time consuming everywhere in Alaska. Doing biometrics in regional hubs like Juneau would make a big difference for those applying for citizenship, along with refugees we've welcomed into our community.

Allowing USCIS appointments at Department of Homeland Security's CBP offices around the state would also be more efficient for taxpayers, taking advantage of existing equipment. It's needed in a state as vast as Alaska, and it's the right thing to do to support our newest Alaskans. Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,


Senator Jesse Kiehl


Representative Sara Hannan


Representative Andi Story



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

March 9th, 2023

The Honorable Jesse Kiehl
State Capitol Room 419
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Kiehl:

Thank you for your October 13, 2022 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Secretary Mayorkas asked that I respond on his behalf.

We understand the difficulty some U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) applicants may experience with traveling to the closest field office or Application Support Center for their biometrics appointment. USCIS currently has fewer than 20 applicants awaiting biometrics in Alaska. USCIS has reviewed various ways we are able to collect biometrics without placing an undue burden on the applicant. In some instances, without sacrificing program integrity, USCIS may be able to reuse previously submitted biometrics, and where reuse is not possible, conduct a mobile route to capture biometrics in locations outside of Anchorage. In fact, we plan to conduct the first mobile route to Juneau the week of March 27th.

As USCIS is a primarily fee-funded agency, while we will continue to make every effort to provide mobile services, we appreciate your support in understanding that we must be responsible stewards of the filing fees that our customers pay, managing a limited budget that must ensure cost-effective services for all. In special circumstances, USCIS may also work with Customs and Border Protection (CBP) or local law enforcement entities to manually collect biometrics and mail completed fingerprint cards to USCIS for processing.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Please share this response with the other organizations that cosigned your letter. Should you require any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ur M. Jaddou", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ur M. Jaddou
Director