

Administration Slams Door on Thousands of Legal Immigrants: AILA Condemns Agencies' Bait and Switch

Cite as "AILA InfoNet Doc. No. 07070264 (posted Jul. 2, 2007)"

WASHINGTON, D.C.--The American Immigration Lawyers Association strongly condemns the bait and switch perpetrated by the federal government on thousands of intending immigrants who have waited in line for years and were following the rules for obtaining a "green card."

On June 13, 2007, the U.S. State Department announced that, as of July 2, individuals seeking permanent residence ("green cards") through employer sponsorship finally would be allowed to proceed with their applications. Applicants would have a short window, possibly only through July or perhaps August, to complete their paperwork.

Those intending immigrants, immediately and at great expense, rushed to gather final documents, complete their paperwork and obtain required medical exams. Many sent their applications off on Friday, June 29 for arrival on July 2 at the Department of Homeland Security, for the last phase of the multi-step process that leads to a green card.

However, on the very day the door was to open, DOS and DHS slammed it shut.

On July 2, DHS and DOS announced-based on no different information than they had on June 13 when they announced the opening of this filing door-that all applications would be turned away.

"People ask why those who come to the United States illegally can't just follow the rules," said Kathleen Campbell Walker, President of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. "But here people followed the rules and did everything right, yet without warning or explanation the door was slammed in their faces. This hoax perpetrated by these two government agencies is unconscionable, and is an example of how badly our immigration system is broken."

AILA calls on the Administration to do the right thing and keep its promise to the people affected by this sudden reversal. AILA also calls on Congress to get it right this time and fix our badly broken system.