

KEITH SELF
3RD DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4303

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GREENVILLE, TX 75401

September 12, 2024

Ms. Ur M. Jaddou, Director
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Officer of the Director (MS 2070)
Camp Springs, MD 20588-0009

Dear Director Jaddou,

I am writing to request USCIS implement a mandatory policy requiring all immigration documents that require shipping through a carrier (USPS or other) must be sent with a trackable accountability measure. This accountability measure could be either a tracking number or required signature and must be applied to every document sent to an approved applicant from any USCIS facility. This accountability requirement will exclude documents that are presented to approved USCIS applicants in person.

During the last 45 days alone, our office has received several assistance requests from constituents who have received approval notices for their USCIS documents, but the documents never arrived. The lost documents include Green Cards, Employment Authorization Documents, and Advanced Parole documents. Their notices indicate the document has been approved, produced, and mailed, but the constituent was not provided a tracking number. Upon making inquiry, our offices were told that there is no tracking number, and the constituent should wait an additional 30 days. When we inquire again after the required wait time, USCIS simply responds that the constituent will need to repeat the application process. This normally equates to additional fees of between \$400 and \$650 for affected constituents, an additional 2 to 41 months of wait time, and in many cases loss of employment, loss of driver's license, or the inability to travel to see loved ones.

Establishing a requirement for accountability is a win-win policy. It will eliminate the need for USCIS to employ valuable resources to repeat a process that has already been completed, thus preventing duplication of the workload. It also protects the agency from the accusation of failure to adequately process applications. Requiring shipping accountability will largely prevent the potential for USCIS error, which reduces inquiry-based email and phone traffic between USCIS facilities and congressional offices as well.

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For the applicant, it will prevent the burden of doubled fees and processing times, prevent the potential loss of their livelihood and allow them to undertake authorized travel when they have family or business needs in their home country.

I urge you to put in place this required tracking policy for USCIS approved documents as soon as possible, so that the agency and all parties will see results in the quality of service provided. Thank you for considering this request.

If you have any questions, please contact Carmen Rockett on my team at 972-202-4150 or Carmen.Rockett@mail.house.gov. Please respond within 30 days of receipt.

Sincerely,



Keith Self
Member of Congress





November 19, 2024

The Honorable Keith Self
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Self:

Thank you for your September 12, 2024 letter to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) requesting a mandatory policy that requires all immigration documents be shipped through a carrier (USPS or other) with a trackable accountability measure.

USCIS takes the production and delivery of our secure identification documents extremely seriously. As such, we have partnered with the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) since 2008 to deliver every Permanent Resident Card (PRC), Employment Authorization Document (EAD), and Travel Document (TD) using Priority Mail with delivery tracking and confirmation. All secure identity documents are assigned tracking numbers during production. The tracking numbers are uploaded to the USPS via the Secure Mail Initiative (SMI), managed by USCIS. The SMI website available to USCIS contact centers and field offices provides tracking information using an applicant's receipt number printed on either the Form I-797, Receipt Notice or Form I-797, Approval Notice. Customers may call the USCIS Contact Center (1-800-375-5283) to obtain the status of their documents by providing the receipt number.

In 2019, USCIS established a centralized Post Office Non-Deliverables (PONDs) Unit to process returned secure identity documents (PRC, EAD, and TD) that were received from the USPS as undeliverable for re mailing to customers who have an updated and validated address on file. The PONDs Unit uses SMI to send the returned card to the customer which includes the Priority Mail with delivery tracking. All secure documents received as undeliverable are inventoried daily into the Secure Inventory Tracking System, built within SMI. When an undeliverable document is received, the PONDs Team searches systems for an address change and sends the document to the new address. One of the most common reasons secure documents are returned is "Addressee Unknown", which according to USPS could mean the address is incomplete, the addressee moved or the mail is refused among other reasons. Approximately 92 percent of all returned documents are remailed within 60 days of receipt, if a correct address is found.

In an effort to reduce non-delivery of mailed documents, in October 2023, USCIS launched a new online change of address tool.¹ This Enterprise Change of Address self-service tool allows customers with pending applications or request to update their address on their own and significantly improves the speed and efficiency of the process. Since the launch of this tool there has been significant customer adoption for change of address needs and USCIS has begun to see a reduction in non-delivery customer service requests. The agency shares the concerns you raise and continues to look at these issues to identify solutions and appreciates your feedback.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Should you require any additional assistance, please have your staff contact the USCIS Office of Legislative Affairs at (240) 721-3801.

Respectfully,

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

¹ See <https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/alerts/uscis-launches-new-online-change-of-address-tool>.