



October 25, 2024

Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20016

Director Neera Tanden  
Domestic Policy Council  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Director Ur Jaddou  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
20 Massachusetts Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20001

**RECEIVED**  
**By ESEC at 1:38 pm, Oct 25, 2024**

Dear Secretary Mayorkas, Director Jaddou and Director Tanden:

The 110 undersigned businesses, trade associations, and chambers of commerce respectfully request your prompt and careful attention to the growing work permit backlog, which is endangering economic growth and adversely impacting state and local industries and communities across the United States. **During the final months of this calendar year, we urge you to address the work permit backlog by prioritizing the processing of initial and renewal work permit applications. This will enable more workers to get to work and give business owners the assurance that their workforce can continue contributing for years to come.**

As business leaders, we understand that a robust workforce is our most valuable asset. Therefore, our top priority is ensuring businesses have the necessary talent to foster resilient communities and thriving economies. And yet, talented and eager immigrant workers are unable to participate in the job market because they must wait for over a year to obtain work authorization or renew their work authorization with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Localities across the country are feeling the effects of the [current and chronic labor shortages](#), which vary [significantly across different industries](#), and our immigration system's lack of efficiency in work permit processing is hurting our businesses and the U.S. economy.

**Given demographic shifts, immigrant workers are needed to fill these critical gaps.**

Business leaders have warned that, amidst continuing low unemployment, the demand for labor far exceeds the available workforce. If every single unemployed person was hired, there would still be [1.34 million unfilled jobs](#), according to the Critical Labor Coalition. This is due in part to

our aging workforce combined with a shrinking pool of workers. Immigrants, however, are [16.4 percent more likely to be of working age](#) than their U.S.-born counterparts, allowing them to more readily fill these dire workforce needs.

**Immigrant workers are and will continue to be essential to U.S. economic growth and competitiveness for years to come.** According to [Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell](#), “a big part of the story of the labor market coming back into better balance is immigration returning to levels that were more typical of the pre-pandemic era.” Increased numbers of immigrant workers have helped [stave off a recession](#) and boost our economy, with the U.S. [outperforming our peers](#) around the world despite the unprecedented threat posed by the pandemic. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that increased immigration will swell the U.S. economy by [\\$7 trillion](#) over the next decade and reduce the U.S. national debt by [\\$900 billion](#) — an undeniable testament to the importance of the immigrant workforce for our collective livelihood.

Processing work permit applications quickly has a direct positive impact on maintaining and growing immigrants’ invaluable contributions to the U.S. workforce. Their talent and skills make the United States [more competitive](#) at a global level and help fill shortages in [critical industries](#) such as healthcare, education, construction, and hospitality. **That is why we urge you to take immediate action to eliminate the work permit backlog and provide stable access to work permits for years to come.**

Respectfully,

Access Community Care  
ADC Immigration Law, LLC  
American Business Immigration Coalition  
American Council of Engineering Companies of Colorado  
AM Legal Documents Corp.  
Ann Arbor SPARK  
Apfel Law Group  
Associated General Contractors of Maine  
Birdwell & Aamold, P.C.  
Borderplex Alliance  
Boundless Immigration  
Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance  
Cifuentes Escalona Garces Law  
Colorado Business Roundtable  
Columbia Group LLLP  
Columbus (OH) Chamber of Commerce  
Convergent Science, Inc.  
Copper Mountain Resort  
Cozen O'Connor  
Critical Labor Coalition  
Dallas Regional Chamber  
Eastern Floral

El Paso Chamber  
El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Fort Bend Chamber  
Feyen Zylstra  
Frey Immigration Law Firm PLLC  
Furniture Friends  
Gallegos Corp  
Garza Labor  
Global Detroit  
Grace Management Group LLC  
Grand Rapids Chamber  
Greater Hamilton Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Houston LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Medina Chamber of Commerce  
Greater Omaha Chamber  
Greater Topeka Chamber  
GWI, Inc.  
Headbloom Cross-Cultural Communication  
Host-A-Scholar  
Hughes Nursery & Landscaping  
Hunt Companies, Inc.  
ImLaw, PC  
InvestUP  
J. Aponte & Associates, LLC  
J. Canavati & Co. LLC  
Jan Joseph Bejar, APLC  
Joseph M Rollo and Associates PC  
Just Right Strategy  
Kleiman International Consultants  
Kobi's Place  
Ky-Win LLC  
Lancaster Chamber of Commerce  
Language Equity & Access Partners (LEAP)  
Law Office of Amy Maldonado, LLC  
Law Office of Angelique Montano PLLC  
Law Office of Christine Contreras  
Law Office of Megan Guzman  
Law Office of Muna Jondy  
Law Office of Ralf D. Wiedemann LLC  
Law Office of Richard J Davis  
Law Offices of Danielle Nelisse  
Law Offices of Mariela Caravetta  
Law Offices of Shirley Sadjadi  
Lima Expeditions, LLC  
Locke Immigration Law LLC

Longview TX Chamber of Commerce  
Luke's Lobster  
Matrix Law  
Michigan Works! Association  
Miller Johnson  
Mixed Staffing and Recruiting  
Mokhiber & Moretti PLLC  
Nixon Peabody LLP  
Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance  
North Texas Commission  
OBG Center  
Ohio African Chamber of Commerce  
Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association  
Ohio Life Sciences Association  
Princeton Mercer Regional Chamber  
Pro 15  
Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida  
Regionomics LLC  
Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce  
Retail Association of Maine  
Saev Hernandez Immigration Practice PLLC  
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Seaport Law Group LLP  
Seth C. Addo-Yobo, Attorney At Law  
Small Business Association of Michigan  
Small Business Majority  
State Business Executives  
Tailwind Immigration Law, LLC  
Takhsh Law, P.C.  
Tampa Bay Latin Chamber of Commerce  
Teresa Salazar-Cosmos, Law Office  
Texas Business Leadership Council  
The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia  
Traverse Connect  
United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Upbeat Financial Inc.  
Urban Evolution  
USAHello  
Vail Valley Partnership  
Venezuelan American Chamber  
Voices For Health, Inc.  
Western Ohio Cut Stone

CC:

Acting Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman, Nathan Stiefel  
Assistant Secretary for Border and Immigration Policy of DHS, Royce Murray  
Chief, USCIS Office of Policy & Strategy, Avidah Moussavian  
Counselor, Office of the Secretary of DHS, Charanya Krishnaswami  
Chief of Staff of USCIS, Felicia Escobar Carillo  
USCIS Associate Director External Affairs Directorate, Carrie Selby  
Deputy Assistant to the President for Immigration, Elisabeth Lawrence  
Director for Immigration Policy for the Domestic Policy Council, Manpreet Kaur Teji



**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**

November 26, 2024

American Immigration Council  
PMB2026  
2001 L Street N.W., Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20036  
[info@immcouncil.org](mailto:info@immcouncil.org)

Dear American Immigration Council:

Thank you for your October 25, 2024 letter to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). I am responding on behalf of the Department.

USCIS is committed to the continuous introduction of process efficiencies and technology improvements to reduce its backlogs and this includes the Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization. We reduced our overall backlog by 15 percent in Fiscal Year 2023, which was the first time in over a decade that the agency was able to do so.<sup>1</sup> For Fiscal Year 2024, we anticipate this trend to hold as we compile and analyze our data from the last 12 months.

USCIS has improved the processing of the Form I-765, both new applications and renewals, to ensure that people eligible to work or eligible to request employment authorization in the United States get a timely decision and, if approved, receive their Employment Authorization Document (EAD) as quickly as possible so they can support their families, enhance their communities, and contribute to our economic strength. USCIS has implemented technological and operational solutions to reduce the processing times for EADs and remains committed to exploring further efficiencies for EAD processing.

USCIS also continues to identify ways to improve the employment authorization process. For example, in April 2024, USCIS published a temporary final rule to increase the automatic extension period for certain EADs from 180 days to 540 days. Furthermore, we have implemented policy changes to minimize the risk of applicants contending with gaps in their employment authorization and/or documentation, including increasing the employment authorization validity period to five years for certain employment eligibility categories. USCIS appreciates the urgency of your letter and is committed to supporting the productivity and

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<sup>1</sup> See USCIS website, “New USCIS Data Shows Progress on Reducing Backlogs, Customer Experience, Employment-based Immigration, Naturalization, and Humanitarian Work,” available at <https://www.uscis.gov/newsroom/stakeholder-messages/new-uscis-data-shows-progress-on-reducing-backlogs-customer-experience-employment-based-immigration-0>

security of immigrant workers and maintaining the positive impact they have on our country and economy.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact the USCIS Public Engagement Division by email at [public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:public.engagement@uscis.dhs.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ur M. Jaddou", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ur M. Jaddou  
Director