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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3811

October 30, 2014

The Honorable Leon Rodriguez
Director
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
20 Massachusetts Ave., 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20529

Dear Director Rodriguez:

I recently read your agency's solicitation seeking bidders for card stock to be used for issuing Employment Authorization Documents (EAD, or "work permits") and Permanent Resident Cards (PRC, or "green cards"). This solicitation, number HSSCCG-14-R-00028, calls for a contractor who can "deliver a combined volume of up to 4 million PRC and EAD cards annually." The solicitation goes on to require that the contractor "demonstrate the capability to support [a] potential 'surge' in PRC and EAD card demand for up to 9M cards during the initial period of performance to support possible future immigration reform initiative requirements." Ultimately, the contract proposal calls for as many as 34 million cards over 5 years.

Issuing work permits and green cards at these advertised levels would represent an astounding increase in immigration. According to the Department of Homeland Security, in 2013, the U.S. government admitted nearly 1 million legal permanent residents. Additionally, it approved just over 1.5 million requests for employment authorization. Given last year's numbers, if the agency were to meet the solicitation's minimum request of 4 million cards annually, this would amount to a roughly 1.5 million increase in the combined number of work permits and green cards issued over a one year period. If the administration hits its target of 34 million cards over five years, then the increase would grow to more than 20 million.

I am very concerned about the impact that such a rapid expansion in the number of work permits and green cards will have on national security, particularly as the Congress has not passed legislation authorizing it. How will the administration conduct background checks on millions more individuals in the same amount of time while keeping the public safe? The administration has vowed to allow unlawful immigrants to stay and work in the U.S. following the November elections. Is this draft solicitation the first step in fulfilling the administration's plan?

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The administration has already demonstrated that it does not closely scrutinize such applications. Just look at the president's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program's 97 percent application approval rate and loose documentation standards. Taking similar steps to allow even broader classes of unlawful immigrants to stay and work in the U.S., particularly when Congress has not passed any legislation authorizing these changes or otherwise ceding the Executive Branch such power, is wrong for our national security – and wrong for our country.

I therefore respectfully request any and all information that you or your agency has regarding this draft solicitation's relation to potential upcoming administrative changes to U.S. immigration law and policy. Please provide me with responses to the following:

- (1) Please explain how USCIS reached the conclusion that it needs card stock for a minimum of 4 million work permits and green cards annually.
- (2) Please explain how USCIS reached the conclusion that it needs card stock for up to 34 million work permits and green cards over 5 years.
- (3) Please explain how USCIS reached the conclusion that it needs up to 9 million cards “during the initial period of performance to support possible future immigration reform initiative requirements.” Moreover, what is the expected duration of this “initial period,” and what do these “possible future immigration reform initiative requirements” entail?
- (4) Has USCIS or any of its predecessor agencies previously requested card stock for the purposes of work authorization or permanent resident cards at the levels requested in the solicitation? If so, please list when and how many?
- (5) Has or will USCIS take steps to ensure that the planned increase in cards under the solicitation will not result in a delay or otherwise negatively impact the processing of applications for legal immigrants, non-immigrants, and those otherwise seeking to enter the country lawfully? Please explain how the agency plans to manage the increased case load.
- (6) How does the agency plan on paying for the increase in the number of work permits and green cards?
- (7) How will the administration conduct background checks on millions more individuals in the same amount of time while keeping the public safe?
- (8) Is this draft solicitation the first step in fulfilling the administration's plan to allow unlawful immigrants to stay and work in the U.S. following the November elections?

Sadly, this is not the first time the American people have learned about changes to our immigration system through the federal procurement process. Last January, the Department of Homeland Security advertised for chaperones to transport an estimated 65,000 unaccompanied alien minors to facilities throughout the country, indicating the administration knew months in

advance that there would be a surge of immigrants to our borders. Months from now, will this latest USCIS solicitation prove to be a similar warning that the administration was prepping for amnesty all along?

The American people deserve transparency and a government that puts their needs, not those of illegal immigrants, first. I look forward to receiving your prompt reply, and request a response by November 20. Please direct your response to Sarah Dansereau with my office, who may be reached by phone at (202) 225-6511 or at sarah.dansereau@mail.house.gov.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lou Barletta".

Lou Barletta
Member of Congress