



Legislation Text

File #: RES 19-2199, **Version:** 1

Supporting the expansion of access to citizenship, lawful permanent residency, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), asylum, and other forms of immigration status and benefits; and opposing the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' proposed fee increases, which would cause great harm to our city and substantially limit access based on wealth and disposable income.

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul is a welcoming and inclusive city that welcomes immigrant and refugees; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul recognizes the strength, diversity, and prosperity that immigrants and refugees contribute to our city; and,

WHEREAS the City of Saint Paul is dedicated to investing in strategies that further welcome immigrants and refugees and has repeatedly affirmed our commitment to protecting our immigrant communities; and,

WHEREAS, newly naturalized citizens become further civically engaged, including by voting, on average earn more, and are able to contribute more fully to the economy; and,

WHEREAS, immigrants who are eligible for lawful permanent residency have deep roots in our country, are a critical part of our families and communities, and contribute greatly to our economy; and,

WHEREAS, recipients of DACA have grown up here, know no other home and enjoy broad public support to become full-fledged Americans; and

WHEREAS, asylum seekers have a legal and human right to seek asylum and our domestic and international obligations require that we allow them that right; and

WHEREAS, U Visa holders and other recipients of humanitarian-based visas should not be priced out of the opportunity to remain with their families;

WHEREAS, the recently proposed rule by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) would, if implemented, increase the citizenship application by 83 percent, from \$640 to \$1,170; increase fees related to lawful permanent residency from \$1,225 to \$2,195; increase DACA renewals from \$495 to \$765; charge for the first time \$50 for asylum; and add a 559 percent increase in fees for a U Visa holder, from \$230 to \$1,515; AND,

WHEREAS, the rule would also eliminate most fee waivers, effectively pricing out immigrants based on their lack of income and class; And,

WHEREAS, USCIS rationalizes the proposed fee increases by stating that it lacks sufficient funds while at the same time that it proposes to transfer \$207.6 million in benefit application fees to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for enforcement purposes, including denaturalization.

RESOLVED, that the City of Saint Paul respectfully but strongly urges USCIS to withdraw the proposed rule to increase citizenship and other immigration statuses and benefits; eliminate most fee waivers, and transfer USCIS funds to ICE for enforcement purposes; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City of Saint Paul urges USCIS to instead work to expand access to citizenship and other statuses, regardless of class, for the benefit of all.; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City of Saint Paul commits to working with community-based organizations to increase access to citizenship and other immigration statuses and benefits.