

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 3, 2026

Joseph Edlow
Director
United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
(USCIS)
5900 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, Maryland 20746

Kash Patel
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
935 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington DC 20535

Dear Director Edlow and Director Patel:

We write to express serious concern regarding reports that USCIS has instituted broad adjudication holds tied to new “enhanced security checks” for immigration benefit applicants as of April 27–28, 2026. According to stakeholders and press reports, this vetting change may affect millions of pending cases and could significantly disrupt adjudications across multiple form types.

According to reports by news outlets, individuals who attended USCIS interviews for permanent residence last month have been told by USCIS officers that adjudications are being placed on hold.¹ This development comes on top of what is already the largest USCIS backlog in history, with more than 11.5 million cases pending and many applicants already waiting years for decisions on benefits that affect their ability to work, travel, and remain lawfully in the United States.² It is imperative to thoroughly screen and vet all applicants seeking immigration benefits, but such vetting should not serve as the basis for an indefinite moratorium on adjudications for any class of immigrants.

In light of these reports, we respectfully request clear, public answers to the following questions:

1. Has USCIS completed an assessment of the total number of cases affected by these adjudication holds?
 - a. Of those cases, how many involve applicants whose fingerprints were previously submitted to the FBI and now must be resubmitted?
 - b. What categories and types of cases (e.g. immigration benefit categories, or priority groups) are subject to this hold?
2. Based on USCIS’s current assessment of the number of affected cases, how long does USCIS estimate it will take USCIS and the FBI to submit, rerun, and complete processing of all pending background checks?
 - a. Have USCIS and the FBI conducted a capacity analysis regarding the FBI’s ability to handle this expanded volume of background checks?

¹ Montoya-Galvez, Camilo. “Trump Administration Mandates Enhanced Security Checks for Immigration Applicants.” CBS News. April 27, 2026. Accessed May 14, 2026. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-administration-mandates-enhanced-security-checks-immigration-applicants-uscis/>.

² “New Dashboard Reveals Insights Into USCIS Backlogs and Processing Trends,” American Immigration Council, accessed May 14, 2026, <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/blog/uscis-backlogs-processing-trends-dashboard/>.

- b. How much delay is anticipated on average for each individual case?
- c. Has the FBI provided assurances to USCIS regarding expected processing times and strategies to manage any additional backlog created by resubmitted or expanded checks?
- 3. What additional vetting steps or checks are being conducted under the new process?
 - a. How do these additional checks yield information that is relevant to eligibility for immigration benefits, beyond what is already provided through existing FBI background checks or other USCIS security screening, including TECS, NCIC, IDENT, IAFIS/NGI, and similar systems?
 - b. What safeguards, guidance, or training is USCIS providing to adjudications officers to ensure they understand which information returned by these checks is material and relevant to determining legal eligibility?
- 4. How do the new FBI background checks differ in scope or substance from the background checks in place prior to April 28, 2026?
 - a. Please explain, and provide any data or analysis supporting, the risk assessment that led USCIS to determine that these expanded checks were necessary.
- 5. Will USCIS notify affected applicants and petitioners that their cases have been paused due to enhanced security checks?
 - a. If so, what information will USCIS provide regarding the reason for the pause, expected timelines, and next steps?
- 6. How does USCIS intend to comply with statutory and regulatory adjudication timeframes, including premium processing guarantees, while approvals are paused pending completion of background checks?
 - a. Will USCIS refund premium processing fees in cases where the premium processing timeline has been exceeded as a result of this hold, while the cases remain pending?

We appreciate your prompt attention to this matter and respectfully request a written response addressing the questions above and explaining what steps DHS and USCIS are taking to ensure that any security-driven changes are narrowly tailored, lawful, and consistent with the agency's obligation to adjudicate cases on an individualized basis.

Sincerely,



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



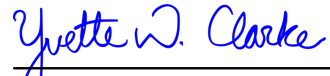
Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



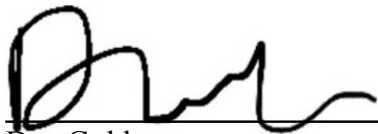
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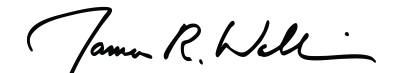
Darren Soto
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Member of Congress



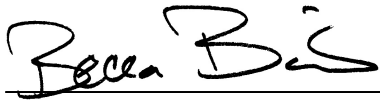
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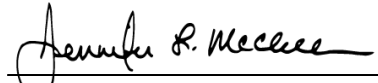
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Member of Congress



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Jennifer L. McClellan
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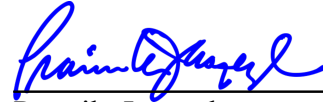
Dina Titus
Member of Congress



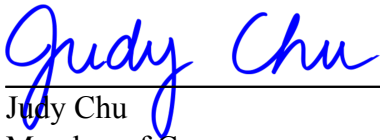
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