

Secretary

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528



**Homeland
Security**

August 30, 2010

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Lofgren:

Thank you for your July 9, 2010 letter regarding the immigration needs of soldiers and their families. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS), including U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), is committed to assisting military families. In partnership with the Department of Defense, USCIS launched the Naturalization at Basic Training Initiative in August 2009, a program that gives non-citizen enlistees an opportunity to naturalize immediately before graduation from basic training. Since January 2009, USCIS has naturalized over 500 military personnel through this initiative.

In addition, a new DHS policy under this Administration promotes the use of several discretionary authorities to help military dependents secure permanent immigration status in the United States as soon as possible. On a case-by-case basis, DHS utilizes parole and deferred action to minimize periods of family separation, and to facilitate adjustment of status within the United States by immigrants who are the spouses, parents and children of military members. Where military dependents have already departed the United States to seek an immigrant visa through consulate processing, DHS in collaboration with the Department of State, is expediting the adjudication of all necessary waivers, including the Form I-601, Waiver of Inadmissibility.

Finally, DHS as a matter of policy does not initiate removal proceedings involving military dependents absent the existence of serious, negative factors indicating that the individuals pose a threat to public safety or national security. On a case by case basis, we also consider requests for joint motions to reopen past proceedings where relief for a military dependent appears to be available.

Thank you for your concern. I hope to continue to foster a close working relationship with you on this and other important issues. An identical letter will be sent to the representatives who co-signed your letter. If you need additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 282-8203.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Janet Napolitano", written over a horizontal line.

Janet Napolitano