

CLMP



CENTER FOR LAW AND
MILITARY POLICY

4952 Warner Avenue, Suite 230
Huntington Beach, CA 92649
(562) 592-5522
www.centerforlaw.org
dwight@centerforlaw.org

October 28, 2019

RE: October 29, 2019 hearing on “The Impact of Current Immigration Policies on Service Members and Veterans, and their Families”

To: Chairman Nadler, Members of the U.S. House Committee on the Judiciary and, specifically, members of its subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship,

The Center for Law and Military Policy (CLMP) is a nonprofit think tank dedicated to strengthening the legal protections of those who serve our nation in uniform. The CLMP aims to improve the lives of the nation’s protectors by developing solutions for their most pressing problems. For veterans, homelessness, unemployment, mental health conditions, and suicide are among the most grievous problems. Service members, veterans, and their families are at higher risk for all of these destabilizing conditions if their pathways to citizenship are disrupted.

The CLMP stands for the ideas that every individual who serves in the U.S. military should have the opportunity to become an American citizen. Moreover, it supports making this idea a reality through policies that facilitate the naturalization process. Currently, there are needless and harmful policies that effectively bar some legal permanent resident service members and veterans from becoming American citizens. These include internal Department of Defense memoranda that effectively prevent many legal permanent resident service members from applying for citizenship and practices of mischaracterizing discharge statuses to disqualify veterans from pursuing the naturalization process processes.

There is also the Military Service Suitability Determinations for legal permanent residents. This internal policy’s alleged security screen is a pretext for discrimination. It ignores the long and rich history of immigrants serving in our forces, and the detrimental impact it has on recruitment and maintaining the diverse and strong makeup of our military.

The CLMP supports legislative action that would reshape current policy to rehabilitate our country’s commitment to enlisting immigrants in its forces and including them as equals by ensuring a pathway to citizenship that is in fact expedited if they do.

The military is accountable to the people, and, by extension, to lawmakers. This subcommittee, as policymakers, must oversee the Department of Defense internal policies closely and take action against discriminatory, punitive practices that prevent service members, veterans, and their families from remaining and thriving in the country they served.

The CLMP is available for more detailed policy analysis on any legislation this subcommittee is considering.

Respectfully,



Dwight Stirling
Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board
Center for Law and Military Policy

Deportation Division of the Center for Law and Military Policy Members including:

Laura Riley, Esq.

Director of Experiential Learning and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Law
University of Southern California Gould School of Law