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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025
<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

July 21, 2020

The Honorable Chad F. Wolf
Acting Secretary
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Joseph Edlow
Deputy Director for Policy
U.S Citizen and Immigration Services
20 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Secretary Wolf and Deputy Director Edlow:

We write to you today about the fact that United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) currently projects to end the fiscal year with a surplus and a sufficient balance to pay its employees for the remainder of the fiscal year. We ask that you take immediate action to save USCIS employees from unnecessary furloughs.

A surplus is certainly in stark contrast to the revenue forecast provided to Congress earlier this year that indicated a \$571 million deficit for FY 2020. Yet, despite this welcome reversal in revenue estimates, USCIS has perplexingly chosen to proceed with furloughs of over 13,000 federal employees. During this pandemic with record unemployment, needlessly forcing these hardworking Americans into unemployment will crush the morale of the workforce and put an untold number of families into unnecessary financial distress.

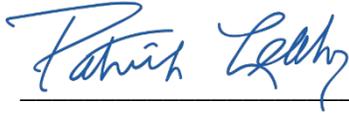
With regard to your projected deficit for FY 2021, we are committed to addressing this issue in the next coronavirus supplemental so that USCIS can continue accomplishing its missions without a furlough.

Now that USCIS is no longer projecting a deficit for FY 2020, you must not sit by as thousands of American jobs are on the line, particularly during a time of unprecedented unemployment. We hope you will do everything in your power to ensure that the hardworking Americans carrying out the critical mission of USCIS do not go without a paycheck this fiscal year.

It is not just these employees and their families that will be impacted by your decision to furlough them – thousands of United States Citizens, employers, and students rely on USCIS work, including members of the military. The loss of these valuable jobs will also cause hardship to the communities where these federal workers live and work – communities already struggling with the pandemic.

Please take action today.

Sincerely,



PATRICK LEAHY
Vice Chairman



JON TESTER
Ranking Member, Subcommittee
on Homeland Security