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OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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August 26, 2022

Ur M. Jaddou, Director
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
5900 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, MD 20588-0009

Dear Director Jaddou,

I write to urge U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to clear the I-765 Application for Employment Authorization backlog to ensure asylum seeking individuals requesting work permits are being connected to employment as quickly as possible. As of August 25, 2022, New York City has received over 7,300 individuals seeking asylum. I greeted asylum seekers at the Port Authority Bus Station, welcoming them to New York City. I can assure you that they are ready and able to work.

Pursuant to federal law, pending asylum applicants must file an application for employment authorization in order to attain any form of legal employment. For more than 20 years it was standard process for USCIS to process applications from asylum seekers within 30 days. On August 21, 2020 USCIS implemented a rule that removed that 30 day processing requirement. Local nonprofit providers and community based organizations are reporting processing times of 6-12 months for these applications.

This is a particular problem because I personally have received several requests from businesses in New York City to hire these asylum seekers.

Given the urgency of the current situation, I am calling on USCIS to implement the former rule that required 30-day review of applications or allocate resources enabling faster processing times.

Sincerely,

Gale A. Brewer
City Council, District 6