



California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative

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Press Release

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Governor Signs Naturalization Services Bill – AB 2060 (De La Torre) New Law Makes State's Citizenship Program Permanent, Guarantees Services for Thousands of Immigrants Eligible to Naturalize

Governor Schwarzenegger today signed a bill that will help provide and develop naturalization services for California's immigrants. Estimates put the number of immigrants in California now eligible to become new citizens at 2.7 million.

"This bill presents a win-win scenario for California and its immigrant population," said Reshma Shamasunder, Director of the California Immigrant Welfare Collaborative, a sponsor of the bill. "By investing in naturalization services, California gains a voter with a greater interest and investment in the health of our schools, businesses and neighborhoods—the immigrant gains a greater sense of belonging and the rights and protections citizenship brings."

Additional sponsors of AB 2060, which was authored by Assembly Member Hector De La Torre, include the California Catholic Conference, and Jewish Family and Children's Services. California has had a Naturalization Services Program for eight years, but this is the first time the program has been established in statute, making it permanently part of the state's governmental infrastructure.

"By signing this bill, the Governor is acknowledging California's demographic and political realities," declared Steward Kwoh, Executive Director of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Los Angeles, "Immigrants and their families make up a full half of our state's population and are the social and economic future of our state. This bill allows us to continue to put resources into assisting immigrants to become new citizens by helping them fill out paperwork, prepare for the citizenship test and find English instruction," said Kwoh.

CIWC is a partnership of the National Immigration Law Center, Asian Pacific American Legal Center, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles and Services Immigrant Rights & Education Network (SIREN).

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