

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 291

To establish the National Office of New Americans within the Executive Office of the President, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 8, 2021

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. WARREN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. WYDEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To establish the National Office of New Americans within the Executive Office of the President, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Office of New
5 Americans Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
9 the Director of the National Office of New Ameri-
10 cans.

1 (2) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The term “Federal
2 agency” has the meaning given the term “agency”
3 in section 551 of title 5, United States Code.

4 (3) OFFICE.—The term “Office” means the
5 National Office of New Americans established by
6 section 3(a).

7 **SEC. 3. NATIONAL OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within
9 the Executive Office of the President an office to be known
10 as the “National Office of New Americans”.

11 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Office are the
12 following:

13 (1) To welcome and support immigrants and
14 refugees in the United States.

15 (2) To promote and support immigrant and ref-
16 ugee integration into, and inclusion in, the social,
17 cultural, economic, and civic life of the United
18 States.

19 (3) To ensure that the Federal Government and
20 Federal agencies promote the pursuit of United
21 States citizenship among immigrants and refugees.

22 (4) To ensure access to quality English lan-
23 guage learning programs that support the successful
24 integration of immigrant adults, including by en-
25 hancing—

1 (A) employment and career prospects and
2 economic integration; and

3 (B) social integration in local communities
4 and participation in civic life, including engage-
5 ment with State and local governments, schools,
6 and private and nonprofit community institu-
7 tions.

8 (5) To improve access to workforce development
9 programs, including by ensuring that such programs
10 meet the demand and the unique language, training,
11 and educational needs of immigrants and refugees.

12 (6) To coordinate the efforts of Federal, State,
13 and local entities to support the effective social, eco-
14 nomic, linguistic, and civic integration of immi-
15 grants, refugees, and the children of immigrants and
16 refugees.

17 (7) To provide advice and leadership to the
18 President, Members of Congress, and other Federal
19 Government officials on the challenges and opportu-
20 nities facing such entities with respect to immigrant
21 and refugee integration.

22 (8) To evaluate the scale, quality, and effective-
23 ness of Federal Government efforts with respect to
24 immigrant and refugee social and economic integra-
25 tion, including access to United States citizenship,

1 English language learning, education, and workforce
2 development programs.

3 (9) To identify the anticipated effects of new
4 Federal policies on existing integration efforts and
5 advise the President on how to address potential in-
6 tegration needs and the effects of such policies.

7 (10) With respect to immigrant and refugee in-
8 tegration efforts, to consult on a biannual basis with
9 State and local government officials on challenges
10 and opportunities presented by such efforts.

11 (11) With respect to the activities described in
12 paragraphs (8) through (10), to ensure the inclusion
13 of the perspectives of immigrants and refugees.

14 (12) To submit to the President and the appro-
15 priate committees of Congress a biannual report
16 that describes the activities of the Office and the re-
17 sults of the consultation processes described in para-
18 graphs (8) through (11).

19 (c) DIRECTOR.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Office shall be headed
21 by a Director, who shall be appointed by the Presi-
22 dent, by and with the advice and consent of the Sen-
23 ate.

24 (2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Director shall—

1 (A) establish policies, objectives, and prior-
2 ities for the Office with respect to immigrant
3 and refugee integration;

4 (B) with the assistance of the Deputy Di-
5 rector for Citizenship and Inclusion, the Deputy
6 Director for Workforce and the Economy, the
7 Deputy Director for Children’s Integration Suc-
8 cess, and the Associate Director of State and
9 Local Affairs, carry out the purposes of the Of-
10 fice, as described in subsection (b);

11 (C) serve as the Chair of the Federal Ini-
12 tiative for New Americans established under
13 section 4;

14 (D) make recommendations to the Presi-
15 dent on changes in the organization, manage-
16 ment, programs, and budget of the Federal
17 agencies to promote the integration of immi-
18 grants and refugees;

19 (E) with respect to efforts to promote
20 United States citizenship and the integration of
21 immigrants and refugees, consult, support, and
22 coordinate with State and local governments;
23 and

1 (F) serve as a member of the Domestic
2 Policy Council and the National Economic
3 Council.

4 (3) POWERS OF THE DIRECTOR.—In carrying
5 out the responsibilities under paragraph (2) and the
6 purposes under subsection (b), the Director may—

7 (A) select, appoint, employ, and fix com-
8 pensation of such officers and employees as
9 may be necessary to carry out such responsibil-
10 ities and purposes;

11 (B) with the concurrence of the head of
12 the applicable Federal agency, direct the tem-
13 porary reassignment within the Federal Govern-
14 ment of personnel employed by such Federal
15 agency;

16 (C) use for administrative purposes, on a
17 reimbursable basis, the available services, equip-
18 ment, personnel, and facilities of Federal, State,
19 and local agencies;

20 (D) procure the services of experts and
21 consultants, in accordance with section 3109 of
22 title 5, United States Code (relating to appoint-
23 ments in the Federal service) at rates of com-
24 pensation for individuals not to exceed the daily
25 equivalent of the rate of pay payable for level

1 GS-18 of the General Schedule under section
2 5332 of title 5, United States Code;

3 (E) accept and use donations of property
4 from Federal, State, and local government
5 agencies;

6 (F) use the mail in the same manner as
7 other Federal agencies; and

8 (G) monitor the implementation of immi-
9 grant and refugee integration-related activities
10 of the Federal Government, including by—

11 (i) conducting program and perform-
12 ance audits and evaluations of each Fed-
13 eral agency; and

14 (ii) requesting assistance from the In-
15 spector General of the applicable Federal
16 agency in such audits and evaluations.

17 (d) DEPUTY DIRECTORS.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—There shall be in the Office
19 a Deputy Director for Citizenship and Inclusion, a
20 Deputy Director for Workforce and the Economy,
21 and a Deputy Director for Children’s Integration
22 and Success, each of whom shall be appointed by the
23 President, in consultation with the Director.

24 (2) RESPONSIBILITIES.—

1 (A) DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR CITIZENSHIP
2 AND INCLUSION.—The Deputy Director for
3 Citizenship and Inclusion shall, among other
4 duties as assigned by the Director, assist the
5 Director in promoting—

6 (i) inclusion of immigrants and refu-
7 gees in the social, economic, and civic life
8 of their communities and the United
9 States; and

10 (ii) access to United States citizen-
11 ship.

12 (B) DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR WORKFORCE
13 AND THE ECONOMY.—The Deputy Director for
14 Workforce and the Economy shall, among other
15 duties as assigned by the Director, assist the
16 Director in—

17 (i) promoting participation of immi-
18 grants and refugees in the United States
19 workforce; and

20 (ii) increasing the contributions of im-
21 migrants and refugees to the United States
22 economy.

23 (C) DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S
24 INTEGRATION SUCCESS.—The Deputy Director
25 for Children's Integration Success shall, among

1 other duties as assigned by the Director, assist
2 the Director in ensuring that Federal policies
3 and programs intended to support the healthy
4 development and educational success of children
5 are effective in reaching and serving the chil-
6 dren of immigrant families.

7 (e) BUREAU OF STATE AND LOCAL AFFAIRS.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is established within
9 the Office a Bureau of State and Local Affairs.

10 (2) ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR.—

11 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Bureau of State
12 and Local Affairs shall be headed by an Asso-
13 ciate Director of State and Local Affairs, who
14 shall be appointed by the President, in con-
15 sultation with the Director.

16 (B) DUTIES.—The Associate Director of
17 State and Local Affairs shall, among other du-
18 ties as assigned by the Director, assist the Di-
19 rector in coordinating the efforts of State and
20 local entities to support the economic, linguistic,
21 and civic integration of immigrants, refugees,
22 and the children of immigrants and refugees.

23 (f) LIMITATION.—An individual may not serve as Di-
24 rector, Deputy Director for Citizenship and Inclusion,
25 Deputy Director for Workforce and the Economy, Deputy

1 Director for Children’s Integration Success, or Associate
2 Director of State and Local Affairs while serving in any
3 other position in the Federal Government.

4 (g) ACCESS BY CONGRESS.—The establishment of
5 the Office within the Executive Office of the President
6 shall not affect access to the Office by a Member of Con-
7 gress or any member of a committee of the Senate or the
8 House of Representatives, including access to—

9 (1) any information, document, or study in the
10 possession of, or conducted by or at the direction of,
11 the Director; or

12 (2) personnel of the Office.

13 **SEC. 4. FEDERAL INITIATIVE ON NEW AMERICANS.**

14 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after
15 the confirmation of the Director of the Office, the Director
16 shall establish within the Office a Federal Initiative on
17 New Americans (referred to in this section as the “Initia-
18 tive”).

19 (b) PURPOSE.—The purposes of the Initiative are—

20 (1) to welcome and support immigrants and
21 refugees in the United States;

22 (2) to establish a coordinated Federal program
23 to respond effectively to immigrant and refugee inte-
24 gration issues; and

1 (3) to advise and assist the Director in identi-
2 fying and implementing the necessary policies to
3 carry out such program.

4 (c) MEMBERSHIP.—The Initiative shall be composed
5 of—

6 (1) the Director, who shall serve as Chair;

7 (2) the Secretary of the Treasury;

8 (3) the Attorney General;

9 (4) the Secretary of Commerce;

10 (5) the Secretary of Labor;

11 (6) the Secretary of Health and Human Serv-
12 ices;

13 (7) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Devel-
14 opment;

15 (8) the Secretary of Education;

16 (9) the Secretary of Homeland Security;

17 (10) the Secretary of State;

18 (11) the Director of the Office of Refugee Re-
19 settlement;

20 (12) the Director of the Small Business Admin-
21 istration;

22 (13) the Director of the Office of Management
23 and Budget;

24 (14) the Director of the Bureau of Consumer
25 Financial Protection; and

1 (15) any other individual—

2 (A) invited by the Director to participate;

3 and

4 (B) who occupies a position listed under
5 level I or II of the Executive Schedule, as pro-
6 vided in sections 5312 and 5313 of title 5,
7 United States Code.

8 (d) DUTIES.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Initiative shall meet at
10 the call of the Chair and perform such duties as the
11 Chair reasonably requires.

12 (2) COORDINATED RESPONSE TO IMMIGRANT
13 AND REFUGEE ISSUES.—The Initiative shall join
14 with Federal agencies in providing a coordinated
15 Federal response to adequately address matters that
16 affect the lives of immigrant and refugee families
17 and local communities with growing immigrant and
18 refugee populations, including access to—

19 (A) English language learning;

20 (B) adult education and workforce train-
21 ing;

22 (C) occupational licensure;

23 (D) early childhood care and education;

24 (E) elementary, secondary, and postsec-
25 ondary education;

- 1 (F) health care;
- 2 (G) naturalization;
- 3 (H) civic engagement;
- 4 (I) immigration assistance and legal serv-
- 5 ices;
- 6 (J) economic development;
- 7 (K) language access services; and
- 8 (L) other services the Director identifies as
- 9 aiding the integration of immigrants and refu-
- 10 gees into the social, cultural, economic, and
- 11 civic life of the United States.

12 (3) LIAISON WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

13 (A) IN GENERAL.—Each member of the

14 Initiative shall serve as a liaison to the Federal

15 agency of the member to ensure that the Fed-

16 eral agency coordinates with and responds to

17 the recommendations of the Initiative in a time-

18 ly and meaningful manner.

19 (B) DUTIES OF A LIAISON.—The duties of

20 each member as a Federal agency liaison in-

21 clude—

- 22 (i) developing, for the applicable Fed-
- 23 eral agency, immigrant and refugee inte-
- 24 gration goals and indicators;

1 (ii) implementing the biannual con-
2 sultation process described in section
3 3(b)(10) by consulting with the State and
4 local counterparts of the Federal agency;

5 (iii) reporting to the Initiative on the
6 progress made by the Federal agency in
7 achieving the goals and indicators de-
8 scribed in clause (i); and

9 (iv) upon request by the Director and
10 subject to laws governing disclosure of in-
11 formation, providing such information as
12 may be required to carry out the respon-
13 sibilities of the Director and the functions
14 of the Office.

15 (4) RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INITIATIVE.—

16 Not later than 1 year after the date on which the
17 Initiative becomes fully operational, and every 2
18 years thereafter, the Director shall submit to Con-
19 gress a report that includes the following:

20 (A) Findings from the consultation process
21 described in section 3(b)(10), including a de-
22 scription of the immigrant and refugee integra-
23 tion opportunities offered by, and integration
24 challenges facing, State and local governments.

1 (B) An assessment of the effects of, and
2 recommendations with respect to, pending legis-
3 lation and executive branch policy proposals.

4 (C) A description of the possible effects of
5 pending legislation and executive branch policy
6 proposals on immigrant and refugee integra-
7 tion.

8 (D) An identification of any Federal pro-
9 gram or policy that has a negative impact on
10 immigrants, refugees, and local communities
11 with growing immigrant and refugee popu-
12 lations, as compared to the general population,
13 and recommendations for changes to any such
14 program or policy.

15 (E) Recommendations on legislative solu-
16 tions to better support the successful integra-
17 tion of immigrants and refugees and the chil-
18 dren of immigrants and refugees.

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