

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 4, 200

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND THE FIRST LADY CELEBRATE
INDEPENDENCE DAY 2000
AND WELCOME NEW CITIZENS TO AMERICA

Today the President and the First Lady will celebrate Independence Day at the 6th International Naval Review in U.S. history from aboard the U.S.S. Hue City and officially commence the OpSail 2000 Parade of Sail aboard the U.S.S. John F. Kennedy in the New York Harbor. In recognition of the freedoms enjoyed by American citizens, the President will witness a naturalization ceremony led by Attorney General Janet Reno to swear in twenty new U.S. citizens from 14 different countries across the globe. Thousands of other individuals across the country will be sworn in as U.S. citizens this week. To help expand opportunities for new U.S. citizens and recent immigrants, the Clinton-Gore Administration will announce the award of \$25.5 million to states for English language and civics instruction to help communities provide these important skills to limited English proficient individuals; the President will direct INS to develop a plan to redesign and standardize the citizenship testing process to guarantee consistency nationwide; and finally, the President will urge Congress to pass legislation that would provide humanitarian relief to American immigrant families.

AWARD \$25.5 MILLION TO STATES FOR THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE/CIVICS INITIATIVE. The Administration will announce the availability of \$25.5 million to states for the English Language/Civics Initiative, an innovative way to help states and communities provide limited English proficient (LEP) individuals with access to high-quality English-language, civics, and life skills instruction. This initiative will offer LEP adults opportunities to master English literacy in order to further their education, obtain good jobs, and help build a stronger American community. The high demand for these programs has resulted in waiting lists of thousands of adults across the country looking for the chance to fully participate in American society. The Clinton-Gore Administration has proposed \$75 million in FY 2001 to help an estimated 250,000 LEP adults access these critical opportunities - an increase of nearly \$50 million from the FY 2000 enacted level.

ENSURE CONSISTENCY AND EFFICIENCY IN THE CURRENT NATURALIZATION SYSTEM. Today, the President will direct the INS to develop a plan to redesign and standardize the current citizenship testing process and report back in 60 days with their proposal. Currently, different areas of the country use different tests or testing methods for reading and writing of the English language and U.S. history and government. This plan will help guarantee a consistent test and testing process is available and administered nationwide. From 1993 through 1999, 4.37 million individuals became new Americans; however, there continues to be backlo

of applications. The INS is on track to meet its goal of reducing this backlog by completing 1.3 million applications this fiscal year while maintaining the highest levels of quality and integrity.

PROVIDE FAIRNESS TO ALL IMMIGRANTS. The President will urge Congress to pass two pieces of legislation to correct injustices currently affecting many immigrants already in our country. The proposed Registry Date legislation would allow certain long-term immigrants of good moral character who have been living in the United States for a long time (fifteen years or more) to apply for legal resident status. The Central American and Haitian Parity Act of 1999 would amend the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) to provide certain nationals of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Haiti an opportunity to apply for adjustment of status under that Act. This parity provision would not only provide compassion and fairness for the affected immigrants, but also contribute to the development of stability and peace in these emerging democracies.

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IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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NUMBER OF PAGES TO FOLLOW:

MESSAGE: natz testing memo - finally!

FROM: Cathy St. Denis, Counselor to the Commissioner
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U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service

HQISD 70/33

Office of the Executive Associate Commissioner

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OCT 2 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR THE COMMISSIONER

THROUGH: *Michael A. Pearson*
#7 Michael A. Pearson
Executive Associate Commissioner
Office of Field Operations

FROM: William R. Yates *W R Yates*
Deputy Executive Associate Commissioner
Office of Field Operations
Immigration Services Division

Thank you -
Commissioner
10/6/00

SUBJECT: Proposed Redesign of the English and Civics Testing Component of the
Naturalization Process

Attached please find an outline of our plan for redesigning the English and civics testing portion of the naturalization process. As part of the overall re-engineering of the naturalization program, the Immigration Services Division plans to completely redesign the tests of English and civics in the naturalization process. Funding for this task is included in the Fiscal Year 2001 budget that the President submitted to Congress, and we hope to award a contract early next fiscal year to identify and validate new test material and to propose new standardized approaches to testing.

After we have examined testing content, we intend to identify a testing process that optimizes efficiency, process integrity, and customer service, and then implement this new process at a pilot site for one year. We intend to further refine the process based upon the results of the pilot, then implement the new testing process nationwide shortly thereafter.

Attachment

ENGLISH AND CIVICS TESTING ACTION PLAN

GOAL: To redesign and successfully implement an English and civics testing process that operationalizes “knowledge of English and U.S. history and government” legal requirements, that is efficient, that maintains the integrity of the testing process, and that is customer-friendly for applicants.

OBJECTIVE 1: To identify curricula that validates a naturalization applicant’s knowledge of the English language and of U.S. history and government (civics), and appropriate methods for testing that knowledge.

Tasks:

1. Conduct market research to develop an Independent Government Cost Estimate for identifying curricula and methods.
2. Develop refined estimates of the timeframe required to complete testing redesign and implementation.
3. Prepare Statement of Work that defines the purpose, scope, and expertise required to identify curricula and testing methods. Product deliverables will include:
 - Curricula that provide naturalization applicants with sufficient knowledge of English and civics to meet legal requirements
 - Testing method options
 - Minimum credential requirements for testing examiners according to each option
 - Facility requirements, including physical property, space, minor property, and infrastructure for each testing option
 - Minimum standards required to safeguard integrity of test content and administrative process
 - Quality control mechanisms for each testing option
 - Reasonable accommodations requirements for testing applicants with disabilities
4. Award contract for identifying curricula and methods.
5. Oversee contract completion.
6. Review deliverables to determine if requirements have been met.
7. Analyze testing method options and identify a testing method that will optimize processing efficiency and integrity and customer service.

OBJECTIVE 2: To develop, pilot and implement new English language and civics knowledge testing procedures based upon the identified curricula and testing methods.

Tasks:

1. Prepare detailed project plan and evaluation plan for pilot test period.
2. Identify pilot test locations.
3. Develop policy guidance and standard operating procedures for testing implementation.
4. Identify and describe quality assurance processes and controls.
5. Identify and describe testing instructions for applicants participating in the pilot test.
6. Develop internal test audit procedures to ensure quality and integrity of the test materials.
7. Develop internal test audit procedures to ensure quality and integrity of the test examiner.
8. Implement pilot at selected locations.
9. Evaluate pilot and examine results.
10. Revise testing process based upon pilot results.
11. Begin nationwide implementation.

SCHEDULE:

TASKS	START DATE	FINISH DATE
<i>Objective 1:</i>		
Conduct market research for Independent Government Cost Estimate	December 2000	May 2001
Develop timeframe estimates for development and implementation	December 2000	May 2001
Prepare Statement of Work for identifying curricula and methods	September 2000	December 2000
Award contract	June 2001	December 2001
Oversee contract completion	January 2002	June 2002
Review deliverables	June 2002	November 2002
Analyze testing method options	June 2002	November 2002

TASKS	START DATE	FINISH DATE
<i>Objective 2:</i>		
Prepare detailed pilot plans	December 2002	March 2003
Identify pilot locations	December 2002	March 2003
Develop policy guidance and operating procedures	December 2002	May 2003
Identify quality assurance processes	December 2002	May 2003
Identify and describe testing instructions	December 2002	May 2003
Develop test material audit procedures	December 2002	May 2003
Develop test examiner audit procedures	December 2002	May 2003
Implement pilot	June 2003	June 2004
Evaluate pilot and examine results	June 2003	September 2004
Revise testing process based upon pilot results	September 2004	November 2004
Begin nationwide implementation	January 2005	To be determined