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June 5, 2012

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
20 Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20529

Dear Director Mayorkas:

I write to inquire about procedures regarding U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services' (CIS) Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program and to express my concerns about an apparent dispute between CIS and the Florida Department of State (FDS). I currently serve as the only member of the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Homeland Security from the State of Florida. With a duty to provide Congressional oversight for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and its agencies, it is my hope that you will clarify this situation.

As you know, the SAVE Program is a tool designed to aid federal, state, and local agencies by verifying an applicant's immigration status, helping to ensure that public benefits and licenses are obtained by those who are truly eligible to receive such benefits and licenses. Accurately and quickly determining the status of a benefit applicant ensures that taxpayer dollars are used in the most effective and efficient manner.

The Florida Department of State has engaged in an effort to protect the sacredness of the ballot box for legitimate eligible voters and to ensure the integrity of Florida's voter rolls. In September 2011, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) noted in the Federal Register that the SAVE Program could be used "*for any legal purpose, such as... voter registration.*" In light of that notice, FDS has requested access to the SAVE Program since late 2011. Unfortunately, CIS and FDS have yet to come to an agreement that allows FDS the ability to access the SAVE Program.

Considering this lack of agreement, I respectfully request your response to the following questions in as prompt a manner as possible.

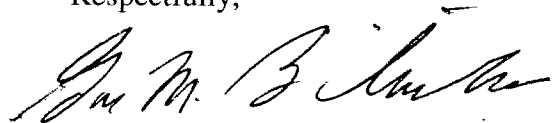
- (1) To utilize the SAVE Program, an agency self-applies to the SAVE Program's website, and then CIS must review the application and enter into a Memorandum of Agreement

(MOA) and Anticipated Collections Addendum (ACA) with the requesting agency. On average, how long does it take CIS to enter into these agreements with a requesting agency after the agency applies through the SAVE Program's website?

- (2) To what extent does CIS provide application assistance to requesting agencies? If a requesting agency has demonstrated a clear desire to access the SAVE Program, how does CIS work with the requesting agency to ensure the speedy resolution of its application?
- (3) Considering that DHS noted that voter registration is an applicable use for the SAVE Program in its Federal Register notice, how many state voting agencies have requested and gained access to the SAVE Program?
- (4) What benefits and licenses does CIS consider acceptable for alien verification by the SAVE Program? Does CIS concur with the DHS notice that verifying eligibility for voter registration is an acceptable use of the SAVE program?
- (5) What constraints are placed upon agencies under the MOAs? Do the MOAs limit the use and collaboration of information obtained through the SAVE Program amongst state and local agencies?

It is my belief that federal, state, and local governments should work in a collaborative manner to ensure the sanctity of the right to vote. I have worked, and will continue to work, to develop sensible policies that reward those who obey the law and protect the interests of citizens of the United States. The sacred, Constitutional right to vote by American citizens should be properly preserved and those not entitled to such should not receive benefits that serve as incentives for greater future illegal immigration. In that regard, I look forward to receiving your response in a timely manner.

Respectfully,



GUS BILIRAKIS
Member of Congress