

## 1/31/2007 - Congressman Albio Sires Statement on Immigration Application Fees Increase

For Immediate Release

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"The increase in the cost of applying for citizenship or a green card proposed by the USCIS puts living legally in the United States out of reach for thousands," said Congressman Sires. "Many undocumented immigrants earn less than the average worker, and would have to dedicate hundreds of hours of their labor just to save enough money to submit their applications. There is no guarantee they will be granted the legal status."

"The federal agency has been bogged down by more security precautions after the 9-11 attacks and an antiquated paper system, but the extra money would only reduce most of the processing time by 20%. Although the USCIS operates exclusively with the fees it receives from applicants, increments should be fair."

"I hope that the 60-day public comment period will allow advocates to voice their concerns and are taken into account. A comprehensive immigration reform will pave the way for undocumented immigrants to achieve the American Dream. I strongly believe they should follow the rules, but I also believe they should not have to decide between putting food on the table and paying for an application for residency or citizenship."