



December 2012 Barnett Law Group Breaking News

NEW USCIS IMMIGRANT VISA FEE On Feb. 1, 2013, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will begin collecting a new USCIS Immigrant Fee of \$165 from foreign nationals seeking permanent residence in the United States. Applicants will pay online through the USCIS website after they receive their visa package from DOS and before they depart for the United States. DOS will provide applicants with specific information on how to submit payment when they attend their consular interview. The new fee is in addition to fees charged by DOS associated with an individual's immigrant visa application.

USCIS CIUDAD JUAREZ FIELD OFFICE NO LONGER ACCEPTING FORMS I-601 AND I-212 Effective Dec. 5, 2012 applicants who are in Mexico will begin filing Applications for Waivers of Inadmissibility and Advance Permission to Return to the U.S. after Deportation or Removal Orders with the USCIS Phoenix Lockbox (see www.uscis.gov). This change of filing locations does not affect those applicants in the U.S. who are waiting for provisional waiver regs, or for those who may have exceptional or humanitarian reasons to file with an international USCIS Office, or for Cuban Waiver applicants.

DACA RELATED TRAVEL FORM PROPOSED On November 27, 2012 USCIS published a request for comments in the Federal Register for proposed changes to Form I-131 Travel Document application. USCIS is proposing to allow Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival Applicants (DACA) to obtain a travel permit under 3 criteria: educational, employment, or humanitarian purposes. These changes will not be implemented until after the public comment period ends on Dec. 31, 2012 and all approved DACA applicants may not travel outside the US without voiding their current DACA status.

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION IMMIGRATION REFORM JANUARY 2013 Expect the Administration to begin a drive for Comprehensive Immigration Reform in the New Year. Key points will include a path to citizenship for the 11 million undocumented aliens in the US; border security bolstering; increased penalties for employers who hire undocumented aliens; and visas for foreign workers.

A HOLIDAY MESSAGE FROM THE BARNETT LAW GROUP

At this time of the year let us remember all of those who have traveled to our country to escape oppression and in hopes of a better life and to offer them a "a place in the inn" just as those travelers to Bethlehem sought over 2000 years ago. As we think back on 2012 The Barnett Law Group has been honored to serve such immigrants as the high school volleyball star who can now pay for college through the DACA work card; the wife of a soldier who served 2 tours in Iraq who can now lawfully gain Permanent Residence; the Middle School Principal who is finally a U.S. citizen after years of believing he was already a citizen; the Pediatrician who is bringing her skills to children in South Texas; those Entrepreneurs who are still willing to take a chance on the U.S.; and all of those skilled workers who bring their talents to our country and create jobs for Americans. We wish our employers and families a holiday season filled with joy and look forward to sharing your best year yet in 2013!

If you are interested in learning more about these new developments, please contact our firm at (713) 980-9939 or psb@barnett-lawgroup.com.