

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 18, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden Jr.,
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

It's always exciting to the entire California Congressional Delegation when you visit our state. During your recent visit to Palo Alto, Congresswoman Anna Eshoo raised an issue with you that is of great importance to all of us: the crushing passport processing delays that have severely disrupted the lives of our constituents. As members of the California Delegation, we write to follow up on your conversation with Rep. Eshoo and request that your Administration take additional steps to address this critical issue.

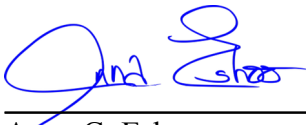
Since March of this year, caseworkers in each of our congressional offices have been bombarded by requests from constituents to help them with their passport applications and renewal requests. Despite submitting the appropriate paperwork well in advance of their travel dates, so many of our constituents have been forced to cancel international travel plans because they cannot obtain a passport. This has prevented our constituents from attending weddings and funerals, spending precious time with family, studying and working abroad, and enjoying much-anticipated summer travel.

While this issue has afflicted Americans across the country, its impact has been particularly severe in California. With the largest foreign-born population in the country, many Californians rely on international travel to maintain ties with family and friends living abroad. Despite being the most populous state, California has only three passport agencies to assist its nearly 40 million residents. For comparison, there are six passport agencies in the Northeast Corridor alone. Given that so few offices serve as the only practical options for in-person appointments for all Californians, it's unsurprising that our constituents have been severely impacted by the backlogs.

To ensure passport processing delays are no longer impacting the lives of our constituents, we respectfully request that you instruct the State Department to set up temporary passport offices in California to increase in-person appointment capacity. We also ask that the State Department increase staffing levels at the existing passport agencies in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego to assist with addressing the backlog of mail-in applications. Lastly, in order to provide our constituents with up-to-date information, we request that the State Department regularly provide our offices with updated processing times for each California passport agency and, if available, processing times for all applications submitted by California residents, including those processed out of state. It would be most helpful for this data to be disaggregated by application type to distinguish between processing times for routine and expedited applications, as well as initial passport applications versus renewals.

As Members of the California Congressional Delegation, we're proud to represent a state that maintains such close ties with people around the world. However, California's strong international ties make it particularly vulnerable to the harmful consequences of recent passport processing delays. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our requests and for your commitment to alleviating the passport backlogs that are afflicting our constituents.

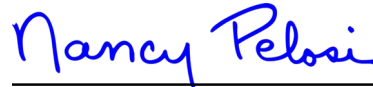
Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress



Nancy Pelosi
Member of Congress



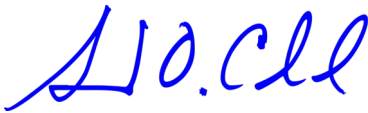
Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress



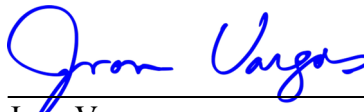
Robert Garcia
Member of Congress



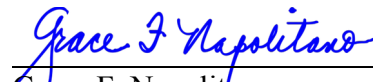
Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



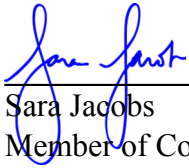
J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Katie Porter
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



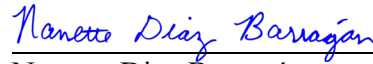
Sydney Kamlager Dove
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



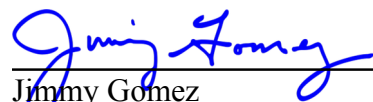
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
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Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress




Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



Josh Harder
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



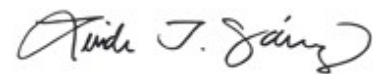
Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Antony Blinken, Secretary of State
The Honorable Rena Bitter, Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs