

Are Democrats Trying to Replicate the Immigration 'Surge of 1996'?

A disturbing new revelation suggests the Obama Administration is attempting to use its authority to influence the upcoming elections to benefit the Democratic Party.

Back in 1996, with Democrats—particularly President Bill Clinton—facing a difficult re-election battle, the Clinton Administration relied upon an “immigration surge” in which nearly three times the normal volume of naturalization requests was approved that helped them at the voting booth. The “Citizenship USA” program implemented by the Immigration and Naturalization Service was the brainchild of Chicago Alderman Daniel Soilis, who said it would “provide the Democrats with a strategic advantage” because “people stuck in Chicago’s naturalization bottleneck represent thousands of potential voters.”

It came at a severe national security cost. INS had naturalized more than 180,000 aliens under the CUSA initiative without doing fingerprint checks, and more than 80,000 aliens had fingerprint checks that generated criminal records, but were naturalized anyway.

If that sounds familiar, you’re not alone.

Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) are concerned about history repeating itself, too. Following the DHS Office of Inspector General’s report that 858 people who had outstanding deportation orders were allowed to gain citizenship under aliases, and a new report that DHS officials are pushing for faster naturalization processing “due to the election,”

they're demanding answers.

The wrote to Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson:

We write to express serious concern about an apparent push by your department to rush the adjudication of naturalization applications before the upcoming presidential election, presumably in an attempt to create as many new citizen voters as possible.

Specifically, we are seeking answers about a copy of an internal agency communication from supervisors at a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) field office asking adjudicators to expedite and even work overtime to adjudicate pending N-400 (naturalization) applications. According to the attached email sent to adjudicators in the USCIS Houston field office on July 21, "The Field Office due to the election year needs to process as many of their N-400 cases as possible between now and FY 2016" (emphasis added). The email encourages staff to work overtime to move their cases, almost certainly to the detriment of processing times for other immigration benefit applications, and announces that the office would be opened on weekends to accommodate such overtime work.

Your department seems intent on approving as many naturalization cases as quickly as possible at a time when it should instead be putting on the brakes and reviewing past adjudications, especially in light of this week's Office of Inspector General report that found USCIS granted U.S. citizenship to at least 858 individuals from "special interest" countries (i.e. countries that are of concern to the national security of the United States) or countries with high rates of immigration fraud, who had final deportation orders under another identity.

In the letter, Grassley and Johnson asked what steps the department is taking to prevent the processing of citizenship

applications for political reasons, and to ensure national security safeguards are properly utilized. They are also requesting an interview with the DHS employee who generated the email in question.