



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

December 27, 2005

Mr. Prakash I. Khatri
USCIS Ombudsman
Mail Stop: 1225
Washington, DC 20528-1225
Via E-mail to: cisombudsman@dhs.gov

Re: Recommend the expansion of the Premium Processing Service (PPS) to include employment-based change-of-status (I-539) applications

Dear Mr. Khatri:

This is in response to your office's recommendation that US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) expand the Premium Processing Program to applications for an extension of nonimmigrant stay of change of status filed on form I-539.

USCIS welcomes your office's interest in expanding the Premium Processing option to additional products and services. However, we note that recently your office has expressed reservations to our plans to expand Premium Processing to the I-539, petitions for permanent workers (I-140) and applications for employment authorization (I-765) based on your office's sense that Premium Processing was an inappropriate process.

As we have indicated in our recent meetings on this subject, USCIS believes in incrementally expanding Premium Processing options to customers to give them the choice of fee and service levels, and we plan to vigorously pursue our current proposal to expand the program to several forms, including the I-539.

To further expand customer choice of payment and service levels, as a part of our Transformation Initiative, USCIS plans to develop accelerated processing options for customers largely focused on e-filing because filing in this way automatically reduces the time involved in certain steps of case processing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert C. Divine".

Robert Divine
Acting Deputy Director, USCIS

cc: Michael Jackson, Deputy Secretary