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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

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November 30, 2007

The Honorable Emilio T. Gonzalez  
Director  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service  
Department of Homeland Security  
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20529

Dear Director Gonzalez:

I have recently been made aware of a troubling situation at the Vermont Service Center in St. Albans, Vermont. As a result of Stanley Associates' succession to a contract held by the Service Center Operations Team (SCOT) to provide data entry, fee collection, plus mail and file operations at the Vermont Service Center, approximately 200 long-time employees will receive serious reductions to their hourly wages. Some of these employees stand to lose almost \$3.00 per hour. In a state like Vermont, which, though rural, has a cost of living above the national average, these wage reductions will have serious negative consequences to the men and women who work at the Vermont Service Center, as well as to their families.

The Vermont Service Center is a source of pride for Vermont, and for the many employees who are responsible for the Center's excellent reputation. It would be truly unfortunate if these wage reductions resulted in a diminishment of employee morale and commitment, both of which are essential to the Center's service quality. The work performed by the Vermont Service Center's employees is critical to our national security, and is a fundamental component of our national immigration system. At a time when the agency has imposed higher fees and promised improved services, it is unacceptable that it then seeks, in effect, to cut the wages of workers performing essential functions. This is especially true in light of the severe backlog of naturalization applications brought about in part by your agency's recent fee increases.

As you continue to look at this situation, I hope you will keep in mind the importance of treating these Federal contract employees fairly. To this end, I urge you to work with Stanley Associates to try to come to a resolution that meets the needs and expectations of the dedicated men and women whose work is so important to the overall success of USCIS. I look forward to hearing of any progress in the near future.

Sincerely,



PATRICK LEAHY  
Chairman