

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2745

To refund passport processing fees and international travel costs as a result of unreasonable delays in passport application processing times, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 15, 2007

Mr. COOPER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Homeland Security, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To refund passport processing fees and international travel costs as a result of unreasonable delays in passport application processing times, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Passport and Travel
5 Cost Reimbursement Act of 2007”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) The Department of State has failed to an-
2 ticipate the increased level of demand for passports
3 after implementing new Western Hemisphere Travel
4 Initiative rules required by Congress.

5 (2) This failure has cost United States citizens
6 many thousands of dollars in unused or cancelled
7 transportation, accommodation, and tour reserva-
8 tions.

9 (3) The Department's proposal to refund fees
10 for failed expedited processing provides insufficient
11 relief to citizens who lost large sums of money
12 through no fault of their own.

13 (4) The United States Government has an obli-
14 gation to deal honestly and fairly with all individuals
15 who come into contact with it, and to remedy any
16 hardship that arises as a result of its negligence.

17 **SEC. 3. REFUND OF PASSPORT PROCESSING FEES.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall re-
19 fund to an eligible United States citizen the fee paid by
20 such citizen in connection with a properly completed and
21 submitted application for a United States passport if such
22 citizen applied or applies for such passport at any time
23 between January 1, 2007, and December 31, 2007, and
24 the time for processing of such passport with respect to
25 such citizen took—

1 (1) 12 or more weeks in the case of a regular
2 application; or

3 (2) 3 or more weeks in the case of an expedited
4 application.

5 (b) APPLICATION FOR REFUND.—To be eligible to re-
6 ceive a refund under subsection (a), a United States cit-
7 izen shall submit to the Secretary an application for a re-
8 fund at such time, in such manner, and containing such
9 information as the Secretary may require.

10 **SEC. 4. REFUND OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL COSTS.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State shall re-
12 fund to a United States citizen eligible for a refund of
13 a passport processing fee under section 3 the cost incurred
14 by such citizen for payment for an economy-class or com-
15 parable ticket, subject to subsection (b), on an inter-
16 national flight departing from a point in the United States
17 if such flight was or is scheduled to depart at any time
18 between January 23, 2007, and December 31, 2007, and
19 if such citizen was or is unable to travel aboard such flight
20 because such citizen was or is unable to timely acquire
21 a passport and such citizen missed or cancelled such flight

22 (b) REDUCTION IN AMOUNT OF REFUND.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall reduce
24 the travel cost refund under subsection (a) by an
25 amount equal to the amount that the airline oper-

1 ating the flight on which such citizen was scheduled
2 to travel has refunded to such citizen as a result of
3 such citizen's inability to travel aboard such flight,
4 in accordance with the refund policies of such air-
5 line.

6 (2) BUSINESS-CLASS OR FIRST-CLASS TICK-
7 ET.—A citizen who submits an application for a re-
8 fund under this section shall be limited to a refund
9 in an amount equal to the cost of an economy-class
10 or comparable ticket for the international flight on
11 which such citizen was or is unable to travel, subject
12 to any reduction under paragraph (1).

13 (c) INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall request from
14 airlines a list of United States citizens who paid for tickets
15 for international travel with such airlines but who did not
16 travel with such airlines during the time period specified
17 in subsection (a).

18 (d) APPLICATION FOR REFUND.—To be eligible to re-
19 ceive a refund under subsection (a), a United States cit-
20 izen shall submit to the Secretary an application for a re-
21 fund at such time, in such manner, and containing such
22 information as the Secretary may require.

1 **SEC. 5. ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE FOR CERTAIN INDIVID-**
2 **UALS.**

3 The Secretary of State is authorized to provide to a
4 United States citizen who is eligible for a refund under
5 sections 3 and 4 assistance if the Secretary determines
6 that such citizen has suffered an extraordinary financial
7 hardship, such as any provable tour costs, as a result of
8 a delay in passport application processing times and
9 missed or cancelled international travel.

10 **SEC. 6. CERTIFICATION.**

11 The Secretary of Homeland Security and the Sec-
12 retary of State may not implement the plan required
13 under section 7209(b) of the Intelligence Reform and Ter-
14 rorism Prevention Act of 2004 (Public Law 108–458; 8
15 U.S.C. 1185 note) with respect to the establishment of
16 a single implementation date for sea and land borders
17 until such time as such Secretaries have submitted to Con-
18 gress in writing a certification that the passport agencies
19 of the Department of State are able to process applica-
20 tions for passports with minimal disruption to the travel
21 plans of United States citizens.

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