

113TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 4949

To establish the National Office of New Americans to support the integration of immigrants to the United States into the economic, social, cultural, and civic life of their local communities and the Nation, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 24, 2014

Mr. CÁRDENAS (for himself and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, 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

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## A BILL

To establish the National Office of New Americans to support the integration of immigrants to the United States into the economic, social, cultural, and civic life of their local communities and the Nation, 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 “New American Success  
5       Act of 2014”.

**1 SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

2 The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title.
- Sec. 2. Table of contents.
- Sec. 3. Findings and declaration of policy.

TITLE I—CITIZENSHIP AND NEW AMERICANS

- Sec. 101. National Office of New Americans.
- Sec. 102. Task Force on New Americans.
- Sec. 103. Authorization of appropriations.

TITLE II—GRANTS

- Sec. 201. Initial Entry, Adjustment, and Citizenship Assistance Grants.
- Sec. 202. Integration Success Grants.
- Sec. 203. Integration Success Fund.

TITLE III—ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

- Sec. 301. Waiver of English requirement for senior new Americans.

TITLE IV—RULEMAKING

- Sec. 401. Rulemaking requirement.

**3 SEC. 3. FINDINGS AND DECLARATION OF POLICY.**

4 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-  
5 ings:

6 (1) According to the Migration Policy Institute,  
7 there are 13,400,000 non-citizen residents in the  
8 United States with limited proficiency in English.

9 (2) According to the Department of Homeland  
10 Security, approximately 1,100,000 legal immigrants  
11 enter the country annually. About half of these legal  
12 immigrants lack full proficiency in English.

13 (3) According to the Migration Policy Institute,  
14 an estimated 70 percent of the unauthorized immi-  
15 grant population ages 19 and older have limited pro-  
16 ficiency in English.

1                   (4) According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics,  
2 more than two-thirds of the foreign-born population  
3 does not have a postsecondary degree, and  
4 foreign-born adults are three times more likely to  
5 lack a high school diploma or equivalent than native-  
6 born adults.

7                   (5) According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics,  
8 19 of the 30 fastest growing occupations re-  
9 quire workers with some form of postsecondary edu-  
10 cation or training.

11                  (6) These statistics suggest that a lack of  
12 English proficiency and limited education serve as  
13 serious impediments to labor market success for im-  
14 migrants.

15                  (7) A century ago, during the last great wave  
16 of immigration to this country, the public and pri-  
17 vate sectors promoted the integration of newcomers  
18 through the Settlement House movement, the found-  
19 ing of the modern public library system, the estab-  
20 lishment of universal public education.

21                  (8) Although currently dozens of Federal and  
22 State programs support, and thousands of govern-  
23 ment agencies and nonprofit organizations operate,  
24 programs that teach English, promote acquisition of  
25 workforce skills, provide citizenship assistance, and

1 otherwise promote the integration of immigrants and  
2 their children, such programs are often not coordi-  
3 nated or aligned, limiting the capacity of such pro-  
4 grams to identify and test promising practices, lever-  
5 age resources, or bring effective interventions to  
6 scale.

7 (9) It is in the national interest to facilitate the  
8 rapid acquisition of English language skills by immi-  
9 grants to the United States and to otherwise pro-  
10 mote the integration of immigrants and their chil-  
11 dren into the mainstream of our economy and soci-  
12 ety.

13 (10) Empowering immigrants and their family  
14 members to effectively integrate into the mainstream  
15 of the economic, social, cultural, and civic life of  
16 their local communities and the Nation as a whole  
17 will ensure that United States immigration policies  
18 result in more productive and competitive local  
19 economies and more cohesive and harmonious com-  
20 munities.

21 (11) Data, policies, and programs relevant to  
22 immigrant integration crosscut the responsibilities of  
23 numerous Federal agencies as well as those of State  
24 and local governments and nongovernmental actors.

1                             (12) The overlapping nature of integration  
2 issues and the lack of coordination of immigration  
3 policies and programs make it difficult for the Presi-  
4 dent and Congress to understand and respond to  
5 pressing integration challenges and opportunities.

6                             (13) Improved coordination of integration goals,  
7 policies, and programs across sectors and levels of  
8 government would greatly enhance the ability of the  
9 Federal Government to create and maintain an im-  
10 migration system that is more suited to modern  
11 times and benefits the interests of the Federal Gov-  
12 ernment, communities with growing immigrant pop-  
13ulations, as well as immigrants and their family  
14 members.

15                             (b) DECLARATION OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the  
16 United States to—

17                             (1) promote the civic, linguistic, and economic  
18 integration of immigrants and their young children  
19 into the United States;

20                             (2) establish national goals for integrating im-  
21 migrants and their young children into the United  
22 States, and measure the degree to which such goals  
23 are met;

24                             (3) assess and coordinate Federal policies, regu-  
25 lations, and programs related to the integration of

1 immigrants, including an assessment of Federal  
2 agency jurisdiction and budget concerns;

3 (4) consult with State and local governments on  
4 integration challenges and opportunities for the pur-  
5 pose of improving Federal integration policy and  
6 program efforts;

7 (5) track the performance of Federal, State,  
8 and local integration initiatives, including measures  
9 of reach, effectiveness, and cost; and

10 (6) engage stakeholders at different government  
11 and nongovernment levels to identify integration op-  
12 portunities and challenges.

## 13 **TITLE I—CITIZENSHIP AND NEW 14 AMERICANS**

### 15 **SEC. 101. NATIONAL OFFICE OF NEW AMERICANS.**

16 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL OFFICE OF NEW  
17 AMERICANS.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the  
19 Executive Office of the President a National Office  
20 of New Americans (in this title referred to as the  
21 “Office”).

22 (2) APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS.—There shall  
23 be at the head of the Office a Director appointed by  
24 the President (in this title referred to as the “Direc-  
25 tor”). The President is authorized to appoint a Dep-

1       uty Director and such Assistant Directors as the  
2       President determines to be necessary.

3           (b) FUNCTIONS.—The functions of the Office are—

4              (1) to oversee and coordinate the efforts of  
5       Federal, State, and local entities to ensure the effec-  
6       tive economic, linguistic, and civic integration of im-  
7       migrants and their children;

8              (2) to provide advice and leadership to the  
9       President, Congress, and other Federal Government  
10      officials on the challenges and opportunities facing  
11      such entities with regards to immigrant integration;

12              (3) to establish national goals for immigrant in-  
13       tegration and measure the degree to which such  
14       goals are met;

15              (4) to serve as a member of the Domestic Pol-  
16       icy Council;

17              (5) to cooperate closely with the Office of Man-  
18       agement and Budget and other relevant executive  
19       agencies and departments to analyze the impact of  
20       immigration policies and of immigrant integration  
21       efforts on the Federal budget;

22              (6) to evaluate the scale, quality, and effective-  
23       ness of Federal Government efforts concerning im-  
24       migrant integration;

1                         (7) to identify the anticipated effects of new  
2                         Federal immigration policies on existing integration  
3                         efforts and advise the President on how to address  
4                         any potential integration needs or impacts resulting  
5                         from such policies;

6                         (8) to consult on a biannual basis with State  
7                         and local government officials on the immigrant in-  
8                         tegration challenges and opportunities facing State  
9                         and units of local government;

10                         (9) to consult with the Secretaries and Direc-  
11                         tors identified in title II on the administration of the  
12                         grant programs established by such title; and

13                         (10) to submit to the President and the appro-  
14                         priate congressional committees a biannual report  
15                         that describes the activities of the Office and the re-  
16                         sults of the consultation process provided in para-  
17                         graph (8).

18                         (c) DEADLINE FOR ESTABLISHMENT.—The Office  
19                         shall begin operating not later than one year after the date  
20                         of the enactment of this Act.

21                         **SEC. 102. TASK FORCE ON NEW AMERICANS.**

22                         (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

23                         (1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall establish  
24                         within the Office of New Americans a Task Force on  
25                         New Americans.

1                             (2) DEADLINE FOR ESTABLISHMENT.—The  
2                             Task Force shall be fully operational not later than  
3                             18 months after the date of the enactment of this  
4                             Act.

5                             (b) PURPOSE.—The purposes of the Task Force  
6                             are—

7                             (1) to establish a coordinated Federal program  
8                             to respond effectively to immigrant integration  
9                             issues; and

10                            (2) to advise and assist the Director in identi-  
11                             fying and implementing the necessary policies to  
12                             carry out such program.

13                            (c) MEMBERSHIP.—The Task Force shall be com-  
14                             prised of—

15                             (1) the Director, who shall serve as Chair of the  
16                             Task Force;

17                             (2) the Secretary of the Treasury;

18                             (3) the Attorney General;

19                             (4) the Secretary of Commerce;

20                             (5) the Secretary of Labor;

21                             (6) the Secretary of Health and Human Serv-  
22                             ices;

23                             (7) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Devel-  
24                             opment;

25                             (8) the Secretary of Education;

13 (d) DUTIES.—

24 (A) early childhood care and education;

- (B) elementary, secondary and postsecondary education;
- (C) adult education and workforce training;
- (D) health care;
- (E) naturalization; and
- (F) economic development.

(3) LIAISON WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

16 (i) creating immigrant integration  
17 goals within the agency;

18 (ii) creating immigration integration  
19 indicators within the agency;

24 (iv) reporting to the Task Force on  
25 the progress made by the agency in achiev-

3                           (4)     RECOMMENDATIONS     OF     THE     TASK  
4     FORCE.—

22 (iv) Recommendations on legislative  
23 solutions to promote immigrant integra-  
24 tion

**25 (B) REPORTING DEADLINE —**

## **19 SEC. 103. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

20 In addition to any amounts otherwise made available  
21 to the Office, there are authorized to be appropriated such  
22 sums as may be necessary to carry out this title.

## 1                   **TITLE II—GRANTS**

### 2   **SEC. 201. INITIAL ENTRY, ADJUSTMENT, AND CITIZENSHIP**

#### 3                   **ASSISTANCE GRANTS.**

4                 (a) **AUTHORIZATION.**—The Director of Citizenship  
5 and Immigration Services, in consultation with the Direc-  
6 tor of the National Office of New Americans, shall award  
7 Initial Entry, Adjustment, and Citizenship Assistance  
8 grants to eligible entities.

9                 (b) **ELIGIBILITY.**—An entity eligible to receive a  
10 grant under this section is a unit of local government, pri-  
11 vate organization, community-based organization, or not-  
12 for-profit organization—

13                   (1) that provides authorized direct legal assist-  
14 ance to immigrants to the United States; and

15                   (2) that submits to the Director of Citizenship  
16 and Immigration Services an application at such  
17 time, in such manner, and containing such informa-  
18 tion as such Director, in consultation with the Direc-  
19 tor of the National Office of New Americans, may  
20 reasonably require.

21                 (c) **USE OF FUNDS.**—

22                   (1) **IN GENERAL.**—Funds awarded under this  
23 section may be used to provide to an eligible non-cit-  
24 izen legal assistance relating to the immigration sta-

1       tus of such non-citizen, or related services. Such as-  
2       sistance may include—

3                 (A) screening to assess the eligibility of a  
4       prospective applicant seeking a change in immi-  
5       gration status;

6                 (B) completing immigration applications;

7                 (C) gathering proof of identification, em-  
8       ployment, residence, and tax payment;

9                 (D) gathering proof of relationships to eli-  
10      gible family members;

11                 (E) applying for any waivers for which an  
12      applicant and qualifying family members may  
13      be eligible; and

14                 (F) advising an applicant on the rights and  
15      responsibilities of United States citizenship.

16                 (2) IMMIGRANTS ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE.—

17       A non-citizen is eligible to receive the assistance de-  
18      scribed in paragraph (1) if such non-citizen is—

19                 (A) seeking to become a permanent resi-  
20      dent or naturalized citizen; or

21                 (B) seeking relief from removal and au-  
22      thorization to remain in the United States law-  
23      fully and permanently.

24                 (d) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-  
25      tion, priority shall be given to—

1                   (1) entities that demonstrate intent to use  
2                   grant funds to serve individuals living in a State  
3                   with a foreign-born population of not less than 5  
4                   percent that has experienced an increase that is  
5                   higher than the national average in the population  
6                   of non-citizen residents during the most recent 10-  
7                   year period, based on data compiled by the Office of  
8                   Immigration Statistics or the United States Census  
9                   Bureau, or units of local government located within  
10                  such State; or

11                  (2) entities that demonstrate intent to use  
12                  grant funds to serve individuals living in any of the  
13                  10 States with the highest number of non-citizen  
14                  residents, based on data compiled by the Office of  
15                  Immigration Statistics or the United States Census  
16                  Bureau, or units of local government located within  
17                  such State.

18                  (e) CERTIFICATION.—In order to receive a payment  
19                  under this section, a participating entity shall submit to  
20                  the Director of Citizenship and Immigration Services a  
21                  certification that the proposed uses of grant funds by the  
22                  entity are consistent with this section and meet all nec-  
23                  essary criteria determined by the Director of Citizenship  
24                  and Immigration Services in consultation with the Direc-  
25                  tor of the National Office of New Americans.

1           (f) ANNUAL REPORT AND EVALUATION.—Not later  
2 than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year for which  
3 an entity receives grant funds under this section, the enti-  
4 ty shall submit to the Director of Citizenship and Immig-  
5 ration Services the following:

6           (1) A report that describes—

7               (A) the activities undertaken by the entity  
8 that were funded entirely or partially by the  
9 grant funds;

10              (B) the geographic area or areas served by  
11 the grant funds;

12              (C) an estimate of the number of non-citi-  
13 zens living in the jurisdiction or service area of  
14 the entity, which demonstrates that the entity  
15 made a reasonable effort to determine such  
16 number;

17              (D) the number of non-citizens receiving  
18 assistance that was funded entirely or partially  
19 by grant funds received by the entity; and

20              (E) the primary languages spoken in the  
21 jurisdiction or service area of the entity.

22           (2) An evaluation of any program of the entity  
23 using grant funds under this section, including an  
24 assessment of—

(A) the effectiveness of such program and recommendations for improving the program;

5 (C) the future needs of States and units of  
6 local government related to immigrant integra-  
7 tion.

8       (g) STATE DEFINED.—In this section, the term  
9 “State” means each of the several States, the District of  
10 Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United  
11 States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the  
12 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

13           (h) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—This section shall be in ef-  
14 feet for a period of 10 fiscal years beginning with fiscal  
15 year 2016.

## 16 SEC. 202. INTEGRATION SUCCESS GRANTS.

17       (a) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of Edu-  
18 cation, the Secretary of Labor, and the Secretary of  
19 Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Di-  
20 rector of the National Office of New Americans (in this  
21 section referred to as the “Director”), may jointly provide  
22 grants on a competitive basis to improve the economic, lin-  
23 guistic, and civic integration of immigrants and their chil-  
24 dren.

1       (b) ELIGIBILITY.—An entity eligible to receive a  
2 grant under this section is a State, or a unit of local gov-  
3 ernment working in partnership with a not-for-profit orga-  
4 nization or community-based organization, that submits to  
5 the Secretaries an application at such time, in such man-  
6 ner, and containing such information as the Secretaries,  
7 in consultation with the Director, may reasonably require,  
8 which may include—

9                 (1) a proposal outlining the methods the entity  
10          intends to use to effectively carry out the activities  
11          funded by the grant;

12                 (2) a sociodemographic profile of non-citizens  
13          living within the jurisdiction or service area of the  
14          entity; and

15                 (3) a description of opportunities and chal-  
16          lenges in improving the economic, linguistic, and  
17          civic integration of immigrants.

18       (c) USE OF FUNDS.—An entity awarded a grant  
19          under this section may use the grant funds—

20                 (1) to expand access to, and improve the quality  
21          of, programs supporting the economic advancement  
22          of immigrants in areas that include financial lit-  
23          eracy, small business development, employment navi-  
24          gation, and training opportunities;

1                         (2) to expand programs that provide basic adult  
2                         education and contextualized English language skills  
3                         that improve the literacy, numeracy, workforce  
4                         skills, and educational attainment of immigrants  
5                         over the age of 18;

6                         (3) to expand access to programs that assist  
7                         immigrants in obtaining recognized postsecondary  
8                         credentials or employment, or in building measurable  
9                         skills to lead to the attainment of an industry-recog-  
10                         nized credential or certificate; and

11                         (4) to educate immigrants about United States  
12                         history, civics, citizenship rights and responsibilities,  
13                         democracy, opportunities to engage in the civic life  
14                         of their community, unit of local government, and  
15                         State, and the navigation of local systems that sup-  
16                         port the economic, linguistic, and civic integration of  
17                         individuals and families.

18                         (d) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this sec-  
19                         tion, priority shall be given to—

20                         (1) an entity that uses not less than ten percent  
21                         of matching funds from non-Federal sources;

22                         (2) an entity that collaborates with at least one  
23                         public or private entity to carry out a comprehensive  
24                         plan to improve the coordination of relevant immi-

1       grant integration services and accelerate the integra-  
2       tion progress; and

3                 (3) a State—

4                         (A) that has a foreign born population of  
5                       not less than 5 percent and that has experi-  
6                       enced an increase in non-citizen residents that  
7                       is higher than the national average during the  
8                       most recent 10-year period, based on data com-  
9                       piled by the Office of Immigration Statistics or  
10                      the United States Census Bureau, or a unit of  
11                       local government located within such State; or

12                         (B) that is one of the 10 States with the  
13                       highest number of non-citizen residents, based  
14                       on data compiled by the Office of Immigration  
15                       Statistics or the United States Census Bureau,  
16                       or a unit of local government located within  
17                       such State.

18                 (e) CERTIFICATION.—In order to receive a payment  
19                 under this section, a participating entity shall provide the  
20                 Secretaries with a certification that the proposed uses of  
21                 grant funds by the entity are consistent with this section  
22                 and meet all necessary criteria determined by the Secre-  
23                 taries in consultation with the Director.

24                 (f) ANNUAL REPORT AND EVALUATION.—Not later  
25                 than 90 days after the end of each fiscal year for which

1 an entity receives a grant under this section, such entity  
2 shall submit to the Secretaries the following:

3 (1) A report that describes—

4 (A) the activities undertaken by the entity;  
5 (B) the geographic area or areas served by  
6 the grant funds; and

7 (C) a description of the sociodemographic  
8 characteristics of individuals served by the  
9 grant funds; and

10 (2) An evaluation of any program of the entity  
11 that receives grant funds, including an assessment  
12 of—

13 (A) the effectiveness of such program and  
14 recommendations for improving the program;

15 (B) the future needs of immigrants to the  
16 United States; and

17 (C) the future needs of States and units of  
18 local government related to immigrant integra-  
19 tion.

20 (g) ANNUAL REPORT TO STATES.—The Director of  
21 the National Office of New Americans shall inform each  
22 State annually of the amount of funds available to such  
23 State under this section.

24 (h) STATE DEFINED.—In this section, the term  
25 “State” means each of the several States, the District of

1 Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United  
2 States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the  
3 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

4 (i) EFFECTIVE PERIOD.—This section shall be in ef-  
5 feet for a period of 10 fiscal years beginning with fiscal  
6 year 2016.

7 **SEC. 203. INTEGRATION SUCCESS FUND.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—There is established in the Treas-  
9 ury an account known as the “Integration Success Fund”.

10 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
11 are authorized to be appropriated to the Integration Suc-  
12 cess Fund such funds as may be necessary to carry out  
13 this title.

14 (c) GIFTS, BEQUESTS, AND DEVISES.—The Director  
15 of the National Office of New Americans may solicit, ac-  
16 cept, use, and dispose of gifts, bequests, or devises of serv-  
17 ices or property, both real and personal, for the purpose  
18 of awarding grants established under sections 201 and  
19 202. Gifts, bequests, or devises of money and proceeds  
20 from sales of other property received as gifts, bequests,  
21 or devises shall be deposited in the Integration Success  
22 Fund established by subsection (a) and shall be available  
23 for disbursement to eligible entities in accordance with this  
24 title.

1       **TITLE III—ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
2                   LEARNING**

3       **SEC. 301. WAIVER OF ENGLISH REQUIREMENT FOR SENIOR  
4                   NEW AMERICANS.**

5       Section 312 of the Immigration and Nationality Act  
6   (8 U.S.C. 1423) is amended by striking subsection (b) and  
7   inserting the following:

8       “(b) The requirements under subsection (a) shall not  
9   apply to any person who—

10       “(1) is unable to comply with such require-  
11   ments because of physical or mental disability, in-  
12   cluding developmental or intellectual disability; or

13       “(2) on the date on which the person’s applica-  
14   tion for naturalization is filed under section 334—

15               “(A) is older than 65 years of age; and

16               “(B) has been living in the United States  
17   for periods totaling at least 5 years after being  
18   lawfully admitted for permanent residence.

19       “(c) The requirement under subsection (a)(1) shall  
20   not apply to any person who, on the date on which the  
21   person’s application for naturalization is filed under sec-  
22   tion 334—

23       “(1) is older than 50 years of age and has been  
24   living in the United States for periods totaling at

1       least 20 years after being lawfully admitted for per-  
2       manent residence;

3           “(2) is older than 55 years of age and has been  
4       living in the United States for periods totaling at  
5       least 15 years after being lawfully admitted for per-  
6       manent residence; or

7           “(3) is older than 60 years of age and has been  
8       living in the United States for periods totaling at  
9       least 10 years after being lawfully admitted for per-  
10      manent residence.

11          “(d) The Secretary of Homeland Security may waive,  
12     on a case-by-case basis, the requirement under subsection  
13    (a)(2) on behalf of any person who, on the date on which  
14   the person’s application for naturalization is filed under  
15   section 334—

16           “(1) is older than 60 years of age; and

17           “(2) has been living in the United States for  
18       periods totaling at least 10 years after being lawfully  
19       admitted for permanent residence.”.

## 20           **TITLE IV—RULEMAKING**

### 21   **SEC. 401. RULEMAKING REQUIREMENT.**

22          (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), not  
23     later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of  
24   this Act, each person or persons responsible for carrying  
25   out a provision of this Act or an amendment made by this

1 Act shall promulgate regulations to carry out such provi-  
2 sion.

3 (b) CONSULTATION WITH NATIONAL OFFICE OF  
4 NEW AMERICANS.—For each provision of this Act for  
5 which the Director of the National Office of New Ameri-  
6 cans is not the person responsible for carrying out such  
7 provision, the responsible person or persons shall consult  
8 with the Director in promulgating the regulations de-  
9 scribed in subsection (a).

