



Citizenship

Recognizing children born abroad as “natural-born” US citizens

All Americans should enjoy an equal right to transmit US citizenship to their children at birth, including children born to or adopted by a US citizen abroad. At present, US citizenship is recognized at birth if the American parent satisfies the five-year U.S. presence requirement and it is possible to have a child NATURALIZED as a US citizen if his/her American grandparent satisfies the five-year US presence requirement. Modifying Sections 301, 309 and 320 of the Immigration and Nationality Act would make transmission of US citizenship automatic at birth if either the American parent OR grandparent satisfies the five-year US presence requirement.

Access to USCIS

Improve the cumbersome and time-consuming process of seeking citizen for minor children by ensuring telephone access for Americans abroad to designated persons or offices of the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Americans abroad who seek citizenship for their minor children need, but do not currently have, responsive information and assistance from the US government during the application process.

Consular officers abroad are not involved in the process until approval is granted and can be of no help. USCIS employees in the US are unreachable by phone and correspond by form letter. The approval process takes many months, every mistake adds more months, and if the American parent overseas misses an arbitrary deadline, USCIS generally requires him/her to hire a lawyer to present missing documentation or correct a decision.

Alternatively, this responsibility could be given to consular officers abroad who would have access and could inform the American parents in their consular areas.