



**Homeland  
Security**

**Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman's Third Annual Conference**  
*Government and Stakeholders Together: Improving Immigration Services*

National Archives  
Washington, D.C.  
October 24, 2013

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.      **Registration**  
Lobby of William McGowan Theater

9:00 a.m. – Noon      **Welcome**  
**Remarks from Archivist of the United States, David S. Ferriero**  
**Remarks from Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman, Maria M. Odom**  
**Remarks from Acting Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Rand Beers**  
**Remarks from Senior Policy Director for Immigration, White House Domestic Policy Council, Felicia Escobar**  
William McGowan Theater

**Keynote Panel: Immigration Legal Services – Lessons Learned from Large Scale Legal Services Response**

This panel will discuss various approaches and lessons learned from large scale legal services response to changes in immigration law or policy, including the role, capacity, and strategies of large national networks, state coalitions, legal services providers, *pro bono* partners, and the Government. The panel will also explore key lessons learned from the development and use of innovative technologies to expand and enhance legal services capacity.

Location: William McGowan Theater  
Moderator: Maria Odom, Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) Ombudsman  
Panelists: Matthew Burnett, Immigration Advocates Network (IAN)  
Elizabeth Dallam, Kids In Need of Defense (KIND)  
Kamal Essaheb, National Immigration Law Center (NILC)  
Charles Kamasaki, National Council of La Raza (NCLR)  
Tom Shea, City University of New York (CUNY) Citizenship Now

Noon – 1:30 p.m.      Lunch (on your own)

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.      **Simultaneous Panel Discussions – Session I**

**Panel 1: Challenges in High Skilled Immigration**

This panel will review high skilled immigration options (H-1Bs, L-1s, and the path to permanent residency) for employers and individuals. Panelists will discuss legal, policy, and operational challenges, and potential changes to the statutory framework governing temporary and permanent high skilled immigration.

Location: Washington Room  
Moderator: Gary Merson, CIS Ombudsman's Office  
Panelists: Kate Augustia, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)  
Aman Kapoor, Immigration Voice  
Lynden Melmed, Berry, Appleman & Leiden  
Karla Moran, USCIS

**Panel 2: Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) – Progress and Possibilities**

Panelists will examine the role of the AAO within USCIS and the immigration benefit adjudication process, recent improvements to AAO processing times, the AAO's authority and standard of review, the availability of appeal-related

information, decision consistency and quality, issuance of precedent decisions, and timely access to recent AAO decisions.

Location: McGowan Theater

Moderator: Peggy Gleason, CIS Ombudsman's Office

Panelists: Bob Deasy, American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA)  
Turid L. Owren, Tonkon Torp LLC  
Ron Rosenberg, USCIS, Administrative Appeals Office (AAO)

### **Panel 3: Credible Fear and Reasonable Fear Screenings**

Requests for Credible Fear and Reasonable Fear Screenings are on the rise. This panel will bring DHS together with key stakeholders to discuss the upward trend in credible fear and reasonable fear screening requests and the steps being taken to address the impact of these requests on the U.S. asylum system.

Location: Jefferson Room

Moderator: Rená Cutlip-Mason, CIS Ombudsman's Office

Panelists: Heidi Altman, Capital Area Immigrants' Rights (CAIR) Coalition  
John Lafferty, USCIS  
Leslie Velez, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

3:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.      **Transition Break**

3:15 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.      **Simultaneous Panel Discussions – Session II**

### **Panel 4: USCIS Data Systems – Why They Matter and Efforts to Improve Data Integrity**

This panel will discuss how USCIS data systems are managed and used to ensure data quality and integrity, as well as provide responsive customer service to individuals and employers seeking immigration status verification. Panelists will also discuss verification challenges and effective solutions from the perspective of the Government and the public.

Location: Jefferson Room

Moderator: Carrie Anderson, CIS Ombudsman's Office

Panelists: Soraya Correa, USCIS Enterprise Services Directorate  
Bruce Friedman, DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL)  
Janice Stucke, Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees

### **Panel 5: Immigrant Waivers – Provisional I-601A Waivers and I-601s**

This panel will explore the new 601A process, describe its eligibility criteria and discuss how it is working. The panel will also discuss another major processing change for immigrant waivers that took effect in December 2012, when all filing and adjudication of new overseas I-601 waivers shifted to U.S.-based USCIS offices instead of being handled overseas.

Location: McGowan Theater

Moderator: Peggy Gleason, CIS Ombudsman's Office

Panelists: Cheryl Afflerbach, USCIS  
Michael Dolce, U.S. Department of State (DOS)  
Meg Hobbins, Maggio & Kattar, LLC  
Jerry Rigdon, USCIS  
Doug Stump, Stump & Associates, P.C.