

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1883

To codify procedures regarding naturalization ceremonies conducted by the Secretary of Homeland Security.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 17, 2007

Mr. FOSSELLA introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To codify procedures regarding naturalization ceremonies conducted by the Secretary of Homeland Security.

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. ADMINISTRATIVE NATURALIZATION CERE-**
4 **MONIES.**

5 Section 337 of the Immigration and Nationality Act
6 (8 U.S.C. 1448) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
7 lowing:

8 “(e)(1) The ceremonies described in subsection (d)
9 shall, at a minimum, contain the following events:

1 “(A) The introduction will consist of pre-
2 paratory remarks to explain the nature and sig-
3 nificance of the ceremony as well as an intro-
4 duction of the Department of Homeland Secu-
5 rity representative conducting the ceremony and
6 special guests, participants, or groups.

7 “(B) The introduction of the new citizens
8 may be accomplished either by Department of
9 Homeland Security personnel or by the individ-
10 uals themselves. The name and country of ori-
11 gin of each applicant should be included. If it
12 is not practical to include the name of each ap-
13 plicant due to the size of the group being natu-
14 ralized, a brief statement setting forth the num-
15 ber of persons to be administered the oath and
16 their countries of origin should be made.

17 “(C) The oath of allegiance is administered
18 by a Department of Homeland Security officer
19 consistent with this section.

20 “(D) The new citizens should be requested
21 to recite the pledge of allegiance to the flag of
22 the United States. Either Service personnel, a
23 guest, or one of the new citizens may lead the
24 group.

1 “(E) A guest speaker (e.g., prominent civic
2 leader, naturalized citizen, judge, etc.) or a De-
3 partment of Homeland Security official will de-
4 liver appropriate remarks. A prepared state-
5 ment or congratulatory message from the Presi-
6 dent, Attorney General, or Commissioner may
7 be used. The address should focus on the form
8 and distinctiveness of the United States Gov-
9 ernment and the privileges and responsibilities
10 of citizenship.

11 “(F) Civic and patriotic groups (e.g.,
12 D.A.R., League of Women Voters, Veterans of
13 Foreign Wars, Boy Scouts, etc.) should be in-
14 troduced and allowed to present brief congratu-
15 latory remarks or special programs.

16 “(G) An individual commencement-style
17 presentation should be used if possible; or the
18 certificate may be delivered at the conclusion of
19 the ceremony. Subsequent delivery via mail
20 should be avoided. The new citizens are to be
21 provided with appropriate commemorative ma-
22 terial, and the President’s welcoming letter.

23 “(2) Ceremonies may include activities in addition to
24 those specified in paragraph (1) if the activities are in
25 keeping with the dignity of the occasion.

1 “(3) Care should be taken to avoid associating cere-
2 monies with such activities as partisan political functions,
3 denominational religious functions, sporting events, or
4 functions designed to draw crowds unrelated to the cere-
5 mony and which would not be in keeping with the dignity
6 of the naturalization process.

7 “(f)(1) The ceremonies described in subsection (d)
8 may be conducted at—

9 “(A) Department of Homeland Security offices
10 or facilities;

11 “(B) public sites such as city, county, state or
12 Federal buildings;

13 “(C) school auditoriums, possibly as a part of
14 civics curricula;

15 “(D) court facilities;

16 “(E) historic sites (ideally as a part of special
17 commemorative events);

18 “(F) Outreach locations, such as community
19 agencies or fraternal organizations; or

20 “(G) other appropriate facilities in keeping with
21 the dignity of the occasion.

22 “(2) The decor of the oath ceremony location must
23 be in keeping with the dignity and importance of the con-
24 ferring of United States citizenship. While the Depart-
25 ment of Homeland Security office need not copy doggedly

1 the decor of a typical Federal court house, such type of
2 decor should be kept in mind when planning ceremonies.
3 At a minimum, the flag of the United States and the De-
4 partment of Homeland Security pennant will be promi-
5 nently displayed. A dais or podium should be provided for
6 the use of the officiating employees and speakers. Facili-
7 ties must be clean and neat. When planning space require-
8 ments, ample provision must be made for the guests of
9 new citizens.

10 “(g) A separate calendar reflecting dates of adminis-
11 trative oath ceremonies for the calendar year shall be com-
12 pleted for each Department of Homeland Security office
13 conducting naturalization activities. It shall be completed
14 by January 31 of each year. The calendar, in addition to
15 the dates of the ceremonies, must reflect the location of
16 each ceremony and the number of persons to be scheduled
17 for the ceremony. It must also indicate the total number
18 of oath ceremonies actually held in the prior calendar year,
19 and the number of abbreviated ceremonies held pursuant
20 to subsection (h).

21 “(h)(1) When a district director or officer-in-charge
22 determines that it is in the national interest that an appli-
23 cant not wait until a scheduled oath ceremony to be ad-
24 ministered the oath, an abbreviated oath ceremony may
25 be held. In such case, only those items listed in subpara-

1 graphs (C), (E), and (G) of subsection (e)(1) need be in-
2 cluded in the ceremony.

3 “(2) When it is determined that an abbreviated cere-
4 mony will be held, the district director or officer-in-charge
5 will place in the applicant’s service file a memorandum
6 explaining the need for the abbreviated ceremony.”

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