



**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**

AUG 27 2014

Anthony C. Sullivan  
6141 Afton Place, Apt. 103  
Hollywood, CA 90028

Dear Mr. Sullivan,

Thank you for your June 19, 2014, letter to President Obama, which has been referred to me for response. Your letter seeks an official apology based on a November 24, 1975, denial decision by the former Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) within the U.S. Department of Justice of a family-based immigration petition filed on your behalf by the late Mr. Richard Adams. That denial decision, although promptly withdrawn by the INS, used deeply offensive and hateful language that has no place in any communication—official or otherwise—at any time.

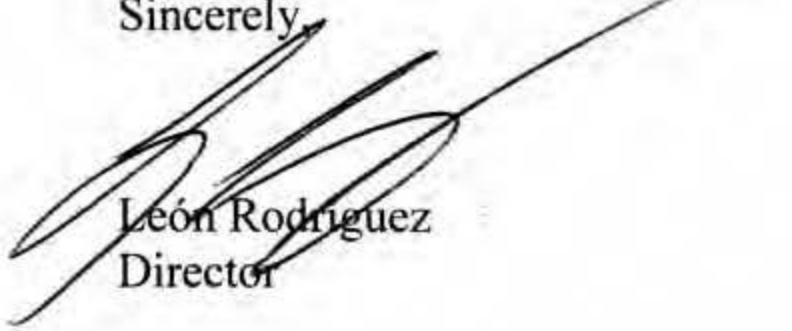
In your letter, you note that Mr. Adams “loved his country and believed in its values: equality, fairness, and social justice.” It is clear that INS should never have sent the 1975 decision letter containing such an offensive term that clearly contradicts these fundamental American values – values that I, and President Obama, share. As the current Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), a successor agency to INS, I believe you and Mr. Adams are owed an apology, and it is my responsibility to offer it. Therefore, on behalf of our agency, I sincerely apologize. While it is long overdue, I hope that this apology will bring you some measure of solace.

Please know that I am committed to ensuring that all individuals who come before USCIS are treated with professionalism and respect, regardless of the substantive decision in their case. This agency should never treat any individual with the disrespect shown toward you and Mr. Adams. Moreover, as an agency, USCIS has fully implemented the U.S. Supreme Court’s landmark civil rights decision in *United States v. Windsor*.

Finally, in addition to your June 19, 2014, letter to the President, you filed with USCIS a motion to reopen regarding Mr. Adams’ visa petition. After careful consideration, USCIS has determined that jurisdiction and authority over this motion rests with the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), as a result of Mr. Adams’ prior appeal of a 1977 INS decision and a subsequent BIA decision in 1978. Accordingly, your motion to reopen has been forwarded to the BIA for its consideration.

Again, you have my sincerest apology for the years of hurt caused by the deeply offensive and hateful language used in the November 24, 1975, decision, and my deepest condolences on your loss.

Sincerely,



León Rodríguez  
Director