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MAYOR EMANUEL HOSTS NATURALIZATION CEREMONY AT THE CHICAGO CULTURAL CENTER

Over 70 Individuals from 32 Countries Presented with Citizenship Certificates at Fifth City of Chicago Naturalization Ceremony

As part of Chicago's New Americans Initiative, Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) today hosted the fifth naturalization ceremony to administer the Oath of Allegiance and distribute citizenship certificates to 71 individuals representing 32 countries.

"We are a nation of immigrants and it is fitting that we hold this ceremony to welcome all of our new citizens the day before we celebrate the 4th of July and our nation's independence," said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. "Now, after the Senate's historic vote, it is time for all of us to call on the United States House of Representatives to take quick action to pass a comprehensive immigration bill that is true to our values as a nation and will create value for our city long into the future."

This is the fifth naturalization ceremony held by Mayor Emanuel and the City of Chicago as part of the New Americans Initiative. The first took place in City Council Chambers at City Hall in June of 2012 during the launch of the Chicago New Americans Initiative. The Chicago New Americans Initiative is a comprehensive municipal effort to assist eligible immigrants become U.S. Citizens.

"What a great way to celebrate our nation's birthday! Allowing aspiring Americans to work towards the momentous day when they take the oath of citizenship and fully commit themselves to their new country should be the goal of our policy on immigrants," said Congressman Luis V. Gutiérrez (IL- 04). The Mayor is a great leader when it comes to making Chicago a welcoming city for immigrants and a tremendous ally in the push for immigration reform."

Congressman Luis Gutiérrez is the Chair of the Immigration Task Force of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, a Member of the Judiciary Committee, and one of seven Members of a bipartisan group in the House crafting an immigration reform measure.

The Chicago New Americans Initiative works to offer assistance to thousands of eligible, law abiding, permanent residents in becoming naturalized, U.S. citizens. Over the next three years, the Chicago New Americans Initiative will directly assist 10,000 immigrants in Chicago to become U.S. citizens; encouraging immigrants to independently initiate their naturalization process; and helping new citizens become fully active participants in the civic life of the city and state.

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Photo Caption: Mayor Emanuel congratulates newly naturalized citizens representing 32 countries at the Chicago Cultural Center.

Photo Credit: Brooke Collins/City of Chicago