

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 13, 2006

SENATE BILL

No. 1267

Introduced by Senator Cedillo

February 9, 2006

An act to add Section 12087.5 to the Government Code, relating to naturalization services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1267, as amended, Cedillo. Office of Immigrant Affairs.

Existing law sets forth the duties of the Department of Community Services and Development respecting certain community programs in the state. Existing law appropriates \$1,500,000 to the department for purposes of the Naturalization Services Program.

This bill would establish within the department the Office of Immigrant Affairs in order to ensure the integration and civic participation of new citizens in the state. The office would be overseen and managed by a director who would administer the Naturalization Services Program and develop a program plan to add components to that program, work with local organizations to ensure the success and availability of services provided through the Naturalization Services Program, and establish an advisory committee to serve as a liaison between the Office of Immigrant Affairs and the immigrant communities of the state.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares as
2 follows:

1 (1) Immigrants are a vibrant force in California's changing
2 demographics. More than one-quarter of California residents are
3 foreign born. Of the 8.8 million foreign born, 39 percent are
4 United States citizens and 3.3 million are legal permanent
5 residents.

6 (2) Most noncitizens have family members who are citizens.
7 Ninety percent of Latinos and 80 percent of Asians live in
8 households with citizens.

9 (3) Approximately 40 percent of Californians speak a
10 language other than English at home.

11 (4) Fifty-five percent of California's immigrants come from
12 Latin America, while 33 percent come from Asia, 8 percent from
13 Europe, 2 percent from North America, and the rest from Africa
14 and Oceania.

15 (5) Immigrants fuel California's economy through their labor
16 and entrepreneurship. Immigrants comprise one-third of
17 California's labor force in key economic sectors: 40 percent in
18 general services, 45 percent in manufacturing, and 33 percent
19 work in a variety of sectors. Sixty-six percent of gardeners are
20 immigrants. Sixty-six percent of cooks are immigrants. Sixty-six
21 percent of domestic workers are immigrants. Ninety percent of
22 farm workers are immigrants.

23 (6) Immigrants are among California's most productive
24 entrepreneurs and have created jobs for tens of thousands of
25 Californians. In San Jose alone, immigrant owners of technology
26 companies created more than 58,000 jobs and generated more
27 than \$17 billion in sales during the 1990s.

28 (7) Immigrants will represent a significant proportion of
29 California's voters in years to come. In California, there are
30 currently 2.7 million immigrants eligible to naturalize and several
31 million more that will soon become eligible to naturalize. This
32 will increase the number of voters who are naturalized citizens in
33 the years to come.

34 (8) California has at least 85 cities where noncitizen adults
35 comprise more than 25 percent of the city's total voting-age
36 population. There are 30 municipalities where noncitizen adults
37 make up more than 40 percent of the voting-age population.

38 (9) Immigrants often require the most assistance immediately
39 upon arrival to the United States. However, as immigrants reside
40 in the state for a longer period of time, they are less likely to use

1 services and more likely to contribute to the state’s culture and
2 economy.

3 (10) It is in the best interest of the state and its residents to
4 establish an Office of Immigrant Affairs for state government to
5 advocate and promote cooperation and understanding between
6 government agencies and immigrant residents, and to assist
7 immigrants toward naturalization.

8 (11) Citizenship and civic participation among all California
9 residents is vital to the economic and societal well-being of the
10 state.

11 (12) It is the state’s responsibility to help its immigrant
12 population integrate in society, develop a sense of belonging, and
13 seize opportunities for success in order to ensure equal
14 opportunity for a high quality of life of every resident.

15 (13) California’s primary goal should be to support the ability
16 of all residents, including immigrants to be economically
17 self-sufficient, participate in our nation’s and state political
18 process, and foster a sense of responsibility to our community.

19 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the Office of
20 Immigrant Affairs ensure state government agencies and
21 California communities are aware of the needs of immigrants and
22 that immigrants receive appropriate assistance to quickly achieve
23 and maintain self-reliance and full integration into our society.

24 SEC. 2. Section 12087.5 is added to the Government Code, to
25 read:

26 12087.5. (a) There is hereby established the Office of
27 Immigrant Affairs within the Department of Community Service
28 and Development. In order to ensure the integration and civic
29 participation of new citizens in the state, the office shall do all of
30 the following:

31 (1) Address the needs of immigrant communities by setting
32 objectives and deliverables, and partnering with state government
33 agencies to provide outreach and services to the ethnic
34 communities.

35 (2) Work with state agencies and departments to identify
36 resources and programs that can be used by immigrant residents
37 to assist their ~~assimilation~~ *integration*, including, but not limited
38 to, education, adult education, language skills, civics, job
39 training, consumer protection, housing, domestic violence,
40 health, and naturalization services.

1 (3) Conduct data-driven policy analysis on issues impacting
2 immigrant communities.

3 (4) Develop strategies, program proposals, and goals that
4 support the ability of new citizens to be economically
5 self-sufficient, participate in governance, and foster a sense of
6 belonging and responsibility to the community.

7 (5) Provide services and information to help new citizens learn
8 English, be informed of our laws and support public safety, know
9 their rights, be responsible family members, engage in civic
10 affairs, and maximize their contributions to ensure a high quality
11 of life in our community.

12 (6) Work with educational institutions, community-based
13 organizations, nonprofits, and private programs to develop a
14 civics curriculum for people participating in the Naturalization
15 Services Program.

16 (7) Serve as a clearinghouse to help new citizens and eligible
17 immigrants for the naturalization process access translated
18 information on resources available in the state. Also, distribute
19 information on adult education, English literacy, civic education,
20 and citizenship services offered by local organizations.

21 (b) The office shall be overseen and managed by a director to
22 be appointed by the department.

23 (c) The director of the office shall do all of the following:

24 (1) Administer the Naturalization Services Program and
25 develop a program plan to add components to that program to
26 allow it to cater to the needs of California's immigrant
27 population more efficiently and effectively in the areas of
28 naturalization and civic participation.

29 (2) Work with local organizations to ensure the success and
30 availability of services provided through the Naturalization
31 Services Program.

32 (3) Establish an advisory committee to serve as a liaison
33 between the Office of Immigrant Affairs and the immigrant
34 communities of the state.

35 (d) The advisory committee shall do all of the following:

36 (1) Along with the Director of the Office of Immigrant
37 Affairs, gather information about the needs of California's
38 immigrant population, determine key state governmental
39 resources used by immigrant communities, identify key policy
40 areas and areas of concern and report findings with

1 recommendations to the state as to how it can respond to the
2 issues impacting California’s immigrant population.

3 (2) Help the office create a strategy to promote public
4 awareness of the contributions of immigrants and how
5 immigration can support community goals.

6 (3) Identify ways to define and measure immigrant integration
7 and self-reliance and report progress to policymakers and the
8 public. The advisory committee shall work to identify ways to
9 improve the naturalization process and immigration services.

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