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### **Hawaii Attorney General Joins Effort Against Trump Administration's Sweeping, Unlawful Increases to Immigration Fees**

**HONOLULU** – Hawaii Attorney General Clare E. Connors today joined a coalition of 19 attorneys general, led by California, in an amicus brief in support of a legal effort to immediately block the Trump Administration's new regulation arbitrarily and dramatically increasing fees for immigration-related applications. As part of the rule, the Trump Administration — for the first time in U.S. history — will impose fees on asylum applications for those fleeing violence and persecution. In the friend-of-the-court brief, the coalition highlights the chilling and potentially dangerous effects the arbitrary fee increases will have on immigrant families and the states, and urges the court to grant a preliminary injunction.

"The fee increases are arbitrary, unjustified and unlawful," said Attorney General Connors. "Their punitive nature can only be viewed as an attempt to limit access to immigration and citizenship."

On August 3, 2020, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) published a final rule dramatically increasing its fee schedule for a wide range of immigration-related applications, including citizenship and asylum. The rule raises fees for many crucial applications by as much as 30 to 546 percent. It imposes these new costs while also eliminating fee waivers that have traditionally allowed lower income immigrants to become fully integrated U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents. For instance, the cost of the fee application to become a U.S. citizen has skyrocketed under the rule from \$640 to \$1,170, an 83 percent increase. For qualifying family members of a victim of crime who receives a U-visa, the application fee has risen astronomically from \$230 to \$1485, a 546 percent increase. In promulgating the rule, USCIS failed to adequately justify the changes and instead unlawfully allocated fee increases in a manner that disproportionately burdens low-income applicants. Ultimately, the rule is an unprecedented attack designed to limit access to immigration and the citizenship application process.

In the amicus brief, the coalition asserts that the rule:

- Robs states and local jurisdictions of the economic and societal contributions of immigrants and ultimately threatens public health by limiting the accessibility of government-funded health insurance;
- Frustrates state programs aimed at helping immigrants achieve financial and legal security; and
- Undermines the rule of law and public safety by making it more difficult for immigrant workers and victims of crimes to come forward and cooperate with law enforcement and labor agencies, including those that protect victims of domestic violence and other crimes, as well as government entities that work to combat wage theft, exploitation, and hazardous work conditions.

In filing the amicus brief, Attorney General Connors joins the attorneys general of California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

A copy of the amicus brief is available [here](#).

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