To: Sean Simon Andrew Fraser, the Minister of Immigration

From: Carol Li

Date: February 15, 2022

Subject: Proposal for expediating FSW-inland applications

**Introduction:**

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has reduced staff at the office and transitioned into the mode of working from home. The shortage of financial support and staff leads to massive application backlogs and delays, especially the application of the Federal Skill Worker (FSW) category. According to data received from IRCC, Canada had a backlog of nearly 1.8 million immigration applications as of Oct. 27, 2021, including 548,195 permanent residence applications where about 49,000 FSW applicants fall under. A recent memo from IRCC indicated that the average waiting time of FSW applicants is about 20-36 months, compared to 6 months before the pandemic.

In comparison, the processing time of some categories has been speeding up, such as the Canadian Experience Class (CEC) and IRCC explains that those applicants are working in Canada so they should be prioritized. However, many applicants who fall under the category of FSW are also staying in Canada, working hard to contribute to the recovery of the Canadian economy but IRCC ignores the fact. This inconsiderate policy and lengthy waiting agony have significantly affected millions of lives in Canada.

**Statement of Problem:**

IRCC asserted that the huge delay was resulted from the pandemic and is prioritizing those applicants who are working in Canada so the CEC applicants, vulnerable Afghans, and parents sponsorship applicants are selected and prioritized. It's unfair to FSW applicants who are also working in Canada and they feel stuck in limbo and left out. This inconsiderate policy and lengthy waiting agony have significantly affected millions of lives in Canada and created a huge complaint on the internet. It keeps families apart, makes applicants lose jobs, and forces them to be paralyzed in their lives seeing no future. It makes people question the ability of the Canadian government and damaged Canada’s reputation. The government must remedy this problem as soon as possible. By solving this problem immediately, we can help restore the credibility of government departments and enable these applicants to start a new life in Canada as soon as possible.

**Proposed Solution:**

The huge delay can be improved by three complementary phases: (1) separating inland and outland applicants who fall under the FSW category and prioritizing inland ones, (2) necessary staffing changes and increasing employment, (3) improving outdated processing technologies.

1. **Separating and prioritizing FSW-inland applications.** First, according to whether the applicant is in Canada or not, the applicant’s case in Canada shall be given priority, especially for the FSW-Inland applicants. The processing shall be conducted in an orderly manner, based on the time sequence of application.
2. **Necessary staffing changes and increasing employment.** Second, adjust the focus of work and send more officers to process FSW cases. Hire more employees to work on the updates and responding to information requests;
3. **Improving outdated processing technologies.** The processing should be more transparent and be updated more frequently. This includes:
* Improving technology and digitizing its operations;
* Providing more access for the applicants to see the process of their cases;

**Scope**

To assess the feasibility of the proposed plan I intend to pursue five areas of inquiry:

1. How does IRCC review immigration cases now? How many reviewing stages are there in the proceedings?

2. What is the average time for IRCC staff to review cases?

3. How long will the applicants need to wait to get responses from IRCC if they launch an information request?

4. Regarding the current processing technologies, what needs to be improved from the viewpoint of applicants and reviewers?

5. How does the delay affect the applicants? Why do they need approval desperately?

**Methods**

My data come from IRCC official website; surveys and interviews with the applicants who are still under this painful waiting period; inquiry letters to RCICs; my own experience and observations in the past 2 years. These will show the necessity of prioritizing FSW-inland applications and better understanding the effectiveness of the proposed plan.

Secondary sources will include academic studies on the processing technologies used by IRCC and their annual financial allocation. These help to understand how much financial support IRCC needs and its feasibility.

**My Qualifications**

My previous educational background and 5 years of working experience develop my ability to extract useful information from online searching. I'm an FSW-inland applicant and I'm experiencing every emotional maladjustment mentioned above. It boosts my interest in researching this topic. I've known many other applicants and RCICs who are willing to be interviewed by me so I have adequate research sources.

**Conclusion**

The long waiting period has been torture for FSW applicants. This proposal can improve the problems mentioned above and restore the credibility and image of the Canadian government. I look forward to your reply. With your approval, I will start the research immediately.