



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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**MAYOR EMANUEL, CONGRESSMAN GUTIERREZ HOST CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY AT
CITY HALL**

*50 Residents from 26 Countries Became U.S. Citizens during the Second Naturalization
Ceremony in City Council Chambers*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today hosted a Citizenship swearing-in ceremony where 50 Chicago residents representing 26 countries became U.S. Citizens in City Hall's Council Chambers. The ceremony was the second ever in City Hall's Council Chambers. Mayor Emanuel was the keynote speaker for the ceremony and was joined by Congressman Luis Gutierrez and Alderman Danny Solis to offer congratulatory remarks to the new citizens. The Oath of Allegiance was administered by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Chicago District Director Lori Pietropaoli. The presentation of colors was conducted by the Marine Math and Science Academy JROTC Color Guard with the National Anthem performed by Cadet Devin Velez from Rickover Naval Academy.

"These public celebrations welcome and congratulate the new Citizens of the United States and make City Hall a leader in celebrating Chicago's immigrant communities," said Mayor Emanuel. "As we build a 21st century economy, we must work together to attract and retain immigrants by helping them to succeed and grow in a safe and welcoming city. I am committed to making Chicago the most immigrant-friendly city in the world by ensuring that every law-abiding Chicagoan has access to the resources they need to become productive members of society and contribute to our thriving global city."

As part of Chicago's New American initiative, the Mayor will host citizenship swearing-in ceremonies at City Hall and other prominent city locations on a regular basis.



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"Today a group of people have the chance to raise their right hand and recite a solemn pledge to be new, fully-fledged members of our society and participants in our democracy," said Rep. Luis V. Gutierrez (IL-04). "It comes at a moment when we are poised to reform our immigration system so that more of the people who live, work, and raise families in our country also have the opportunity to fully participate in our nation's affairs. It reminds us of how long and hard the struggle is to become a citizen and what we also must do to encourage and celebrate citizenship as new Americans become just Americans."

"We are excited that Mayor Emanuel is receptive to hosting special naturalization ceremonies at the Chicago City Council Chambers," said Lori Pietropaoli, Chicago District Director, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). "Naturalizing new United States citizens from around the world is an important function of USCIS, and partnering with the City of Chicago to welcome these new citizens on their special day is a great honor."

The first naturalizations ceremony took place at Council Chambers in City Hall in June of this year 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. This coordinated campaign is the first of its kind and being led by the City of Chicago Mayor's Office of New Americans (ONA), in collaboration with the State of Illinois Governor's Office of New Americans (GONA) and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, Uniting America Campaign.

The Chicago New Americans initiative will work 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.

Promoting citizenship will contribute to the City of Chicago's economic and cultural vitality and increase the City's global competitiveness. New citizens mean new economic growth—and an investment in immigrant integration pays dividends not just for immigrants and their families, but for the city as a whole.



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