

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 · Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 · (360) 753-6780 · www.governor.wa.gov

EXECUTIVE ORDER 08-01

WASHINGTON'S NEW AMERICANS POLICY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, historically and currently, the United States has flourished as a rich and diverse nation due to embracing immigrants from all over the world who moved to our country to experience the freedoms and rights of a democratic society, better the lives of their families, contribute to the economy, and become naturalized citizens;

WHEREAS, the state of Washington continues to benefit and prosper from the cultural diversity, work ethic, and economic contribution that a diverse population has contributed to our state;

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. census bureau, 14 percent of the families in Washington speak a world language other than English;

WHEREAS, Washington has 135,000 legal permanent residents currently eligible to be naturalized as U.S. citizens;

WHEREAS, as part of the global economy, Washington benefits from the talents, contributions, resilience, hard work, entrepreneurialism, and skills of people seeking to become New Americans;

WHEREAS, it is crucial to Washington state's vitality and well-being that Washington is known as and is a state that cherishes, welcomes and sustains its diverse population and the economic growth resulting from that diversity;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Christine O. Gregoire, Governor of the state of Washington, order as follows:

1. The Washington's New Americans Policy Council is established (Council). The Council shall make recommendations to the Governor on topics including but not limited to:
 - a) Strategies to help legal permanent residents become naturalized;
 - b) Acquisition of English language skills integral to the process of becoming citizens;
 - c) Ways to recognize or transfer the skills, certifications and professional credentials people earn in other countries into Washington's economy;

- d) Strategies that are needed to support the success for naturalization, English language acquisition and recognition or transference of certifications and professional credentials;
 - e) Facilitating public-private partnerships for the integration of people seeking to become New Americans into the very fabric of our state, thus creating a more vibrant, prosperous and vital society.
2. The Governor shall appoint 12 to 15 members to the Council. The Governor shall appoint the Council's Chairperson. Council members, who will serve at the Governor's pleasure, shall include representatives from state agencies, the Refugees' Advisory Council, business and labor, and community and nonprofit organizations.
 3. The Department of Social and Health Services shall provide administrative support to the Council.
 4. State agencies shall work in good faith to provide information and assistance, as needed, to the Council in fulfilling its duties.
 5. The Council will make initial recommendations to the Governor no later than December 1, 2008. The Council may make any additional interim reports as needed. The Council shall deliver a comprehensive final report including recommendations about the continuation of and tasks for the Council to the Governor no later than October 1, 2009.

This Executive Order will take effect immediately.

Signed and sealed with the official seal of the state of Washington, on this 20th day of February 2008, at Olympia, Washington.

By:

/s/

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor

BY THE GOVERNOR:

/s/

Secretary of State