

GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
OFFICE

AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Governmental Affairs Office

740 Fifteenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005-1022
(202) 662-1760
FAX: (202) 662-1762

DIRECTOR
Robert D. Evans
(202) 662-1765
rdevans@staff.abanet.org

SENIOR LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL
Denise A. Cardman
(202) 662-1761
cardmand@staff.abanet.org

Kevin J. Driscoll
(202) 662-1766
driscollk@staff.abanet.org

Lillian B. Gaskin
(202) 662-1768
gaskinl@staff.abanet.org

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL
R. Larson Frisby
(202) 662-1098
frisbyr@staff.abanet.org

Kristi Gaines
(202) 662-1763
gainesk@staff.abanet.org

Kenneth J. Goldsmith
(202) 662-1789
goldsmithk@staff.abanet.org

Ellen McBarnette
(202) 662-1767
mcbarnee@staff.abanet.org

E. Bruce Nicholson
(202) 662-1769
nicholsonb@staff.abanet.org

DIRECTOR GRASSROOTS
OPERATIONS/LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL
Julie M. Strandlie
(202) 662-1764
strandlj@staff.abanet.org

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
LAW CONSULTANT
Hayden Gregory
(202) 662-1772
gregoryh@staff.abanet.org

STATE LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL
Rita C. Aguilar
(202) 662-1780
aguilarr@staff.abanet.org

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
Julie Pasatiempo
(202) 662-1776
jpasatiempo@staff.abanet.org

STAFF DIRECTOR FOR
INFORMATION SERVICES
Sharon Greene
(202) 662-1014
greenes@staff.abanet.org

EDITOR WASHINGTON LETTER
Rhonda J. McMillion
(202) 662-1017
mcmillionr@staff.abanet.org

September 22, 2005

Michael Battle
Director
Executive Office for United States Attorneys
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 2616
Washington, DC 20530-0001

RE: Certifications for Immigrant Victims of Crime

Dear Mr. Battle,

I am writing to inquire whether your office has developed any procedures or issued any guidance to United States Attorneys regarding requests from non-citizen victims of crime for certifications that they have been, are, or are likely to be helpful to the investigation or prosecution of criminal activity. As you may be aware, these certifications are a basic prerequisite for individuals to be able to apply with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services for U visa interim relief.

The U visa is a form of humanitarian relief for which non-citizen crime victims who have suffered severe physical or mental abuse resulting from certain criminal activity, and who agree to cooperate with government officials investigating or prosecuting the criminal activity, may be eligible. Many of these individuals are women and children and include victims of domestic violence, trafficking, and rape. The U visa offers an important incentive for survivors of crime to collaborate with law enforcement, and the certification serves as documentation of this collaboration.

The American Bar Association operates pro bono immigration projects including Volunteer Advocates for Immigrant Justice in Seattle, WA, and the South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project in Harlingen, TX. These projects have encountered individuals who may be eligible for U visa interim relief, and we anticipate that they will work with your office in the future on these cases. We would therefore appreciate any information you are able to provide on the criteria that United States Attorneys use in deciding whether or not to sign certifications, and any relevant procedures they have in place for responding to these requests.

We look forward to receiving your response and appreciate your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Evans