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Marcy Forman
Director of Investigations
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RE: Certifications for Immigrant Victims of Crime

Dear Ms. Forman:

I am writing to inquire as to your office's procedures for handling requests from non-citizen victims of crime for certifications from ICE that they have been, are, or are likely to be helpful to the investigation or prosecution of criminal activity. As you are aware, these certifications are a basic prerequisite for individuals to be able to apply with U.S. 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 such 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 therefore 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 your office uses in deciding whether or not to sign certifications, and any relevant procedures your office has 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