

Stop Deportation of Veterans and Restore the MAVNI Program

Whereas, Approximately 8,000 non-citizens join the military each year according to the National Immigration Forum, and as long as they have received certification from the Pentagon that they have served honorably, all are eligible for expedited citizenship under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), and

Whereas, Citizenship in exchange for service is a long-standing military tradition that the military supports, which is why the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest Program (MAVNI) was created in 2008 during President Bush's administration to help foreign nationals earn citizenship through military service, and

Whereas, Trump's Department of Defense changed the MAVNI process in 2017 so that it made it much harder for noncitizen service members to become naturalized, if not impossible, by dramatically slowing the certification process and limiting the number of officials who could approve the applications, and

Whereas, During his tenure, Trump deported permanent legal residents who were veterans who served our country honorably, which is a violation of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), and

Whereas, President Biden's administration continues to deport permanent legal residents who are veterans and prevents them from returning back to the United States, and

Whereas, It is past time to honor our promise to those who are serving or have served our country honorably, and

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors calls on Congressman Carbajal to get legislation passed in Congress that prevents the deportation of veterans who are permanent legal residents who have not been charged with a felony and instruct the military to honor all existing MAVNI contracts by fast-tracking their citizenship for active duty military personnel and veterans.