

THE HONORABLE RICHARD A. JONES

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
AT SEATTLE

ABDIQAFAR WAGAFE, *et al.*, on behalf  
of themselves and others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN, President of the  
United States, *et al.*,

Defendants.

No. 2:17-cv-00094-RAJ

**DECLARATION OF HANIN BENGEZI  
IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS’  
MOTION FOR SUMMARY  
JUDGMENT**

**NOTE ON MOTION CALENDAR:  
July 2, 2020**

I, Hanin Bengezi, hereby declare:

1. I make this declaration based on personal knowledge and if called to testify to these facts, I could and would do so competently.

2. I am a named plaintiff in *Wagafe, et. al v. Joseph R. Biden, et al.*

3. I am a national of Libya and Muslim. I am also a Canadian citizen. My husband is a U.S. citizen, and we have a child together.

4. I immigrated to the United States on a fiancée visa around December 2014. I had to wait about two years for the visa. During this time, my husband and I had to delay our wedding and were forced to live apart—I was in Canada and he was in the United States working full-time. We had no idea why it was taking so long. It was difficult to try to maintain our relationship long-distance. I contacted the American consulate in Montreal multiple times to inquire about my visa application and I never received an explanation for the delay.

1           5.       I applied for adjustment of status in February 2015. I did not hear anything about  
2 my application for over two years until it was approved around May 2017, shortly after I joined  
3 this litigation. USCIS never gave me any explanation or reasons for the delay. To this day, I do  
4 not know why it took so long.

5           6.       During the two-year delay, my attorney constantly reached out about the status of  
6 my application and USCIS never gave him a substantial explanation. I had to miss my brother's  
7 wedding, which took place around April 2015, because I was afraid that if I left the country, I  
8 would not be allowed to return. I was not able to visit my family and my family was not able to  
9 visit me, as their visas had been denied. To this day, my family is not able to visit me.

10          7.       Since moving to the United States, I have faced numerous difficulties while  
11 traveling. Beginning in or around 2013, I began to see the "SSSS" label on my boarding passes,  
12 which usually results in officials subjecting me to secondary screening at the airport. It's not  
13 random, I get selected all the time. They usually pull me out of the security line, which makes it  
14 look like I have done something wrong. Traveling has become a big source of stress and anxiety.  
15 Even as I have come to expect this to happen by now, I still do not know why I am subjected to  
16 this. During these inspections, I am asked incredibly invasive questions about my family, where I  
17 live and work, and whether we received financial assistance. Because of the substantial delays  
18 these screenings cause, I now have to leave the house four hours in advance of flights. Even so, I  
19 have missed many flights because of being placed in secondary inspection or being put on hold  
20 until the boarding door is about to close, so that I have to run with my toddler in order to be able  
21 to make it on the plane.

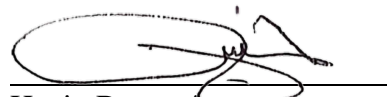
22          8.       During one of these instances, around July 2019, my husband, daughter, and I  
23 were returning from Canada and were held for about 4-5 hours in secondary inspection. The  
24 agents demanded that I hand over my phone or we would not be allowed into the United States. I  
25 handed my phone over to them because I felt like I did not have a choice. We ended up missing  
26 our flight and had to have it rescheduled for the next day.

1           9.       More recently, I was pulled out of the security line on my travel out of Seattle. I  
2 was with my daughter, who was in a stroller. They pulled my daughter out of my stroller and  
3 searched all of my belongings. They've done this to us ever since my daughter was one month  
4 old. My daughter does not understand why this is happening. Most of the time, it's just me and  
5 her traveling alone, and she's crying her head off. I don't know why we are constantly put  
6 through this.

7           10.       The most frustrating part of it all is not knowing why USCIS delayed adjudicating  
8 my application. I was never informed if there were national security concerns with my  
9 application or given the opportunity to explain or respond.

10          11.       I applied for naturalization in March 2020. But it has been one year, and USCIS  
11 still has not scheduled a biometrics appointment or an interview.

12          I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my  
13 knowledge under the laws of the United States of America. Executed on 21st of March, 2021, in  
14 Seattle, Washington.

15   
16 Hanin Bengenzi