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Congress of the United States
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May 9, 2022

David L. Neal
Director
U.S. Executive Office for Immigration Review
U.S. Department of Justice
5107 Leesburg Pike, 18th Floor
Falls Church, VA 22041

Dear Director Neal:

I write today to express my concerns about the new location for the U.S. Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) in Concord, California.

While I am told that EOIR needs to open a new facility in the Bay Area to complete its work more expeditiously, I have strong concerns about both the new location selected in Concord and the lack of outreach and engagement. It is my understanding that the local community was not consulted and that there was no opportunity for public comment or input. Given both the nature of the work done at EOIR and the impact this facility will have on the local community, stakeholder engagement should have been completed early in the process. Since learning of this site selection in a local newspaper¹, I have been contacted by members of the local community who have concerns about this location. I am aware that the expansion of EOIR in the Bay Area has been in the works since 2019, which would have given you ample time for community and stakeholder engagement.

Although my office did get an initial email that an expansion was planned in the Bay Area, it was by no means definitive about where the new location would be and should have been followed by a more concrete proposed plan and direct engagement. I appreciate the need for EOIR to conduct its business, but am very disappointed that it was not done in coordination with the people of the Bay Area.

At this time, if there is an opportunity for you to reconsider this location, I would ask that you set up a meeting with my office where we can discuss the plans and any alternatives that may be possible. If not, I ask that you begin immediate and meaningful community outreach to ensure that stakeholders' concerns are heard. I look forward to hearing back from you, and request a response by May 27, 2022.

Sincerely,



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Merrick Garland, Attorney General of the United States
The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas, Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security

ⁱ <https://www.mercurynews.com/2022/04/06/federal-immigration-agency-lease-deal-big-concord-expand-real-estate/>