

# Pentagon Blocks Army Reservists From Naturalizing Under INA Sec. 329

**DoD Memo, Aug. 17, 2017** - "Effectively immediately, I withhold authority to certify the honorable service (N-426) of Soldiers who have not yet attended Initial Entry Training (IET)."

**Margaret Stock**, BIB Editorial Board Member, MacArthur Foundation Fellow and creator of MAVNI, has this comment:

"In a major change of policy that will sow confusion among immigrants who join the Army Reserve, and harm Army Reserve recruiting, the Chief of the Army Reserve has announced that soldiers in the US Army Reserve will no longer be eligible to file an N-400 to naturalize under Immigration & Nationality Act section 329 without first attending a period of active duty entitled "Initial Entry Training" (IET). The new requirement means that green card holders and other legal immigrants can no longer obtain citizenship through Army Reserve Selected Reserve service and then commission into the Army Medical Corps, Army Chaplain Corps, or Army JAG Corps – among other adverse effects. The announcement also eliminates the MAVNI Health Care Professional program, because US citizenship is required for commissioning through the MAVNI program and MAVNI Health Care Professionals do not attend IET.

Immigrants seeking to naturalize through Reserve service under INA 329 should be counseled not to enlist in the Army Reserve, but instead should try to enlist in the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, or the Reserve Components of the Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The Army Reserve announcement does not affect enlistments in those branches. Immigrants in the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, or the Reserve Components of the Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard can still naturalize through Reserve service without active duty."

