136

U.S. Department of Justice

Immigration and Naturalization Service

identifying data deleted to prevent clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS
425 Eye Street N.W.
ULLB, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20536

[redacted]

File: EAC 01 137 51588 Office: Vermont Service Center Date: JUL 30 2002

IN RE: Petitioner: [redacted]
Beneficiary:

Petition: Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker as a Skilled Worker or Professional Pursuant to § 203(b)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1153(b)(3)

IN BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

[redacted]

Public Copy

INSTRUCTIONS:
This is the decision in your case. All documents have been returned to the office which originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied or the analysis used in reaching the decision was inconsistent with the information provided or with precedent decisions, you may file a motion to reconsider. Such a motion must state the reasons for reconsideration and be supported by any pertinent precedent decisions. Any motion to reconsider must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider, as required under 8 C.F.R. 103.5(a)(1)(i).

If you have new or additional information which you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reopen. Such a motion must state the new facts to be proved at the reopened proceeding and be supported by affidavits or other documentary evidence. Any motion to reopen must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reopen, except that failure to file before this period expires may be excused in the discretion of the Service where it is demonstrated that the delay was reasonable and beyond the control of the applicant or petitioner. Id.

Any motion must be filed with the office which originally decided your case along with a fee of $110 as required under 8 C.F.R. 103.7.

FOR THE ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER,
EXAMINATIONS

Helen E Crawford for

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The preference visa petition was denied by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and is now before the Associate Commissioner for Examinations on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner is a gourmet delicatessen. It seeks to employ the beneficiary permanently in the United States as a specialty cook. As required by statute, the petition is accompanied by an individual labor certification approved by the Department of Labor. The director determined that the petitioner had not established that it had the financial ability to pay the beneficiary the proffered wage as of the filing date of the visa petition.

On appeal, counsel submits a brief and additional evidence.

Section 203(b)(3)(A)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. 1153(b)(3)(A)(i), provides for the granting of preference classification to qualified immigrants who are capable, at the time of petitioning for classification under this paragraph, of performing skilled labor (requiring at least two years training or experience), not of a temporary or seasonal nature, for which qualified workers are not available in the United States.

8 C.F.R. 204.5(g)(2) states in pertinent part:

> *Ability of prospective employer to pay wage.* Any petition filed by or for an employment-based immigrant which requires an offer of employment must be accompanied by evidence that the prospective United States employer has the ability to pay the proffered wage. The petitioner must demonstrate this ability at the time the priority date is established and continuing until the beneficiary obtains lawful permanent residence. Evidence of this ability shall be either in the form of copies of annual reports, federal tax returns, or audited financial statements.

Eligibility in this matter hinges on the petitioner's ability to pay the wage offered as of the petition's filing date, which is the date the request for labor certification was accepted for processing by any office within the employment system of the Department of Labor. Matter of Wing's Tea House, 16 I&N Dec. 158 (Act. Reg. Comm. 1977). Here, the petition's filing date is May 13, 1997. The beneficiary's salary as stated on the labor certification is $697.20 per week or $36,254.40 per annum.

Counsel submitted copies of the petitioner's Form 1120 U.S. Corporation Income Tax Return. The Form 1120-A for fiscal year

from February 1, 1997 through January 31, 1998 reflected gross receipts of $138,876; gross profit of $110,934; compensation of officers of $24,000; salaries and wages paid of $16,400; and a taxable income before net operating loss deduction and special deductions of $6,135. The Form 1120 for fiscal year from February 1, 1998 through January 31, 1999 reflected gross receipts of $233,745; gross profit of $173,329; compensation of officers of $25,300; salaries and wages paid of $9,279; and a taxable income before net operating loss deduction and special deductions of -$816.

The Form 1120 for fiscal year from February 1, 1999 through January 31, 2000 reflected gross receipts of $235,854; gross profit of $170,715; compensation of officers of $23,998; salaries and wages paid of $23,444; and a taxable income before net operating loss deduction and special deductions of $5,740.

The director determined that the evidence submitted did not establish that the petitioner had the ability to pay the proffered wage and denied the petition accordingly.

On appeal, counsel re-submits a letter from the petitioner's accountant which states that the petitioner would not be able to pay $36,254 a year to the beneficiary and argues that:

> We submit that the government has misinterpreted the letter of the certified public accountant and has only taken a portion of its comment on page 1 of the service's decision. The fact is that the documentation submitted does not substantiate the company's ability to pay the wage. However, the certified public accountant, an expert in the field, has analyzed the forms and returns submitted, and in his analysis, concludes that where you have an increase in gross profit, the percentage being raised 74% and 80% which is quite high, it is impossible to have a decrease in available funds or revenue.

Counsel's argument is not persuasive. The petitioner's Form 1120-A for fiscal year from February 1, 1997 through January 31, 1998 shows a taxable income of $6,135. The petitioner could not pay a proffered wage of $36,254.40 a year out of a this taxable income.

In addition, the other federal tax returns submitted continue to show that the petitioner lacked the ability to pay the proffered wage.

Accordingly, after a review of the federal tax returns submitted, it is concluded that the petitioner has not established that it had

sufficient available funds to pay the salary offered at the time of filing of the petition.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1361. The petitioner has not met that burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.