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U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service

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



File: EAC 01 110 50295 Office: Vermont Service Center

Date: JAN 14 2003

IN RE: Petitioner: [Redacted]
Beneficiary: [Redacted]

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)

PUBLIC COPY

IN BEHALF OF PETITIONER: SELF-REPRESENTED

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that 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 that 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 that originally decided your case along with a fee of \$110 as required under 8 C.F.R. 103.7.

FOR THE ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER,
EXAMINATIONS

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 restaurant. It seeks to employ the beneficiary permanently in the United States as a baker. 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 priority date of the visa petition.

On appeal, the petitioner submits a statement 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 priority 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 priority date is February 22, 1999. The beneficiary's salary as stated on the labor certification is \$11.32 per hour or \$23,545.60 per annum.

The petitioner initially submitted an illegible copy of its 1999

U.S. Individual Income Tax Return. On August 20, 2001, the director requested additional evidence of the petitioner's ability to pay the proffered wage to include the petitioner's 1999 and 2000 federal tax returns.

In response, counsel submitted copies of the petitioner's 1999 and 2000 Form 1040 U.S. Individual Income Tax Return. The petitioner's 1999 Form 1040 reflected an adjusted gross income of \$65,006. The tax return for 2000 reflected an adjusted gross income of \$73,447.

The director determined that the documentation was insufficient to establish that the petitioner had the ability to pay the proffered wage and denied the petition accordingly.

On appeal, the petitioner states:

- 1- I am the new owner of West Fitchburg Restaurant as of October 4, 2000
 - 2- I do intend to sponsor the beneficiary.
 - 3- The atty of records made an error indicating that the restaurant was sole proprietorship, in fact it was a corporation.
 - 4- I need 40 days in order to provide your department with the proper evidence
 - 5- Attachments : Money order check \$110.00
copy of my 2000 tax return [three month]
copy of purchase and sale agreement of purchase of stocks
- I thank you and appreciate your assistance in this matter.

The record contains a copy of a stock purchase and sale agreement which shows that [REDACTED] bought the restaurant from Stavros [REDACTED] on October 31, 2000, and a copy of [REDACTED] 2000 Form 1040 U. S Individual Income Tax Return which reflects an adjusted gross income of \$11,964. No copies of the petitioner's Corporation Tax Form for 2000 was provided. In addition, the 1999 Corporation Tax Form for the prior petitioner was not submitted.

No additional evidence of the petitioner's ability to pay the wage offered has been received to date. Accordingly, after a review of the evidence submitted, it is concluded that the petitioner has not established that it had sufficient available funds to pay the salary offered as of the priority date of the petition and continuing to present.

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.