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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
20 Mass. Ave., N.W., Rm. A3042
Washington, DC 20529



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

[Redacted]

FILE:

[Redacted]

Office: TEXAS SERVICE CENTER

Date:

NOV 17 2004

IN RE:

Petitioner:

[Redacted]

Beneficiary:

PETITION:

Petition for Special Immigrant Religious Worker Pursuant to Section 203(b)(4) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(4), as described at Section 101(a)(27)(C) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(27)(C).

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

[Redacted]

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office 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.

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

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prevent clearly unwarranted
invasion of personal privacy

DISCUSSION: The Director, Texas Service Center, initially approved the employment-based immigrant visa petition. On further review, the director determined that the petitioner was not eligible for the visa preference classification. Accordingly, the director properly served the petitioner with notice of intent to revoke the approval of the preference visa petition and her reasons therefore, and subsequently exercised her discretion to revoke the approval of the petition on July 23, 2003. Counsel filed a Form EOIR-29, Notice of Appeal to the Board of Immigration Appeals of Decision of an INS Officer. Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 204.5(n)(2), jurisdiction for an appeal of the denial of an employment based visa petition lies with the Associate Commissioner of Examinations (the Administrative Appeals Office ((AAO)). The petition is now before the AAO on appeal. The appeal will be rejected as untimely filed.

The petitioner is a church. It seeks to classify the beneficiary as a special immigrant religious worker pursuant to section 203(b)(4) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(4), to perform services as a minister. The director also determined that the petitioner had not established that the beneficiary had been engaged continuously in a qualifying religious vocation or occupation for two full years immediately preceding the filing of the petition or that the beneficiary was qualified for the religious position. The director also determined that the petitioner had not established that it qualified as a bona fide nonprofit religious organization or that it had the ability to pay the beneficiary the proffered wage.

Section 205 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1155, states: "The Attorney General may, at any time, for what he deems to be good and sufficient cause, revoke the approval of any petition approved by him under section 204."

Regarding the revocation on notice of an immigrant petition under section 205 of the Act, the Board of Immigration Appeals has stated:

In *Matter of Estime*, . . . this Board stated that a notice of intention to revoke a visa petition is properly issued for "good and sufficient cause" where the evidence of record at the time the notice is issued, if unexplained and unrebutted, would warrant a denial of the visa petition based upon the petitioner's failure to meet his burden of proof. The decision to revoke will be sustained where the evidence of record at the time the decision is rendered, including any evidence or explanation submitted by the petitioner in rebuttal to the notice of intention to revoke, would warrant such denial.

Matter of Ho, 19 I&N Dec. 582, 590 (BIA 1988)(citing *Matter of Estime*, 19 I&N 450 (BIA 1987)).

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 205.2(d) states, in pertinent part:

The petitioner or self-petitioner may appeal the decision to revoke the approval within 15 days after the service of notice of the revocation.

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 103.3(a)(2)(v)(B) states:

Untimely appeal – (1) Rejection without refund of filing fee. An appeal which is not filed within the time allowed must be rejected as improperly filed. In such a case, any filing fee the Service has accepted will not be refunded.

The record indicates that the director issued the decision on July 23, 2003. It is noted that the director improperly advised the petitioner that it had 30 days in which to file the appeal, rather than the 15 days allowed by the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 205.2(d). The director's improper notice of appeal rights does not extend the regulatory requirement that the appeal be filed within 15 days. CIS received the appeal on August 22, 2003, or 30 days after the decision was issued. Accordingly, the appeal was untimely filed.

As the petitioner failed to timely appeal the director's notice of revocation of his visa preference classification, the appeal will be rejected.

ORDER: The appeal is rejected.