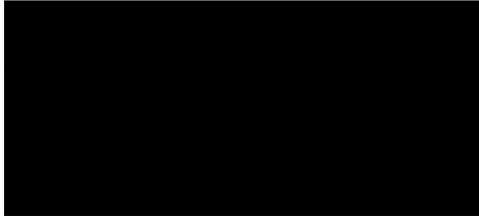


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**U.S. Citizenship
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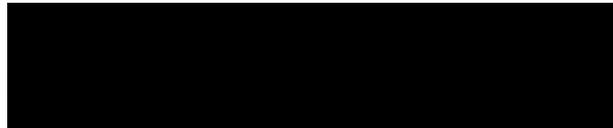
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DA

FILE: EAC 05 048 53311 Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER Date: **AUG 10 2005**

IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiaries:



PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(H)(ii)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(ii)(b)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

SELF-REPRESENTED

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

DISCUSSION: The nonimmigrant visa petition was denied by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner engages in the business of landscape maintenance. It desires to employ the beneficiaries as landscape laborers for nine months. The Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker (Form I-129) was filed on December 9, 2004 without a temporary labor certification, or notice detailing the reasons why such certification cannot be made. On January 10, 2005, the director requested the petitioner to submit a temporary labor certification issued by the Department of Labor (Form ETA 750). In its response to the director's request for evidence, the petitioner submitted a copy of the United States Department of Labor certification dated subsequent to the initial filing date of the petition.

In its notice of intent to deny, dated February 23, 2005, the director afforded the petitioner 30 days from the date of the notice to submit countervailing evidence or case precedence that supported its claim that the Citizenship and Immigration Service (CIS) inappropriately applied the regulatory requirements. The petitioner's response did not overcome the director's reasons for the intent to deny, and the petition was denied.

On appeal, the petitioner states that the regulation only requires that a petitioner apply for a temporary labor certification prior to filing a petition. The petitioner further states that under the regulation a petitioner is not required to obtain a labor certification determination prior to filing Form I-129 with the director.

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(6)(iii) states in pertinent part:

(C) The petitioner may not file an H-2B petition unless the United States petitioner has applied for a labor certification with the Secretary of Labor . . . within the time limits prescribed or accepted by each, and has obtained a labor certification determination as required by paragraph (h)(6)(iv). . . .

The regulations stipulate that an H-2B petition for temporary employment in the United States shall be accompanied by a labor certification determination that is either: (1) a certification from the Secretary of Labor stating that qualified workers in the United States are not available and that the alien's employment will not adversely affect wages and working conditions of similarly employed United States workers; or (2) a notice detailing the reasons why such certification cannot be made. 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(6)(iv)(A).

The final determination notice from the DOL is dated January 27, 2005 and a copy of the original approved labor certification is valid from March 15, 2005 through December 15, 2005. The petitioner applied for a temporary labor certification on November 17, 2004 and a determination was not rendered until January 27, 2005, subsequent to the petition's filing date, December 9, 2004.

Neither the statute nor regulations allow for the acceptance of a labor certification obtained subsequent to the filing of the petition. The petitioner must establish eligibility at the time of filing the nonimmigrant visa petition. A visa petition may not be approved at a future date after the petitioner or beneficiary becomes eligible under a new set of facts. *Matter of Michelin Tire Corp.*, 17 I&N Dec. 248 (Reg. Comm. 1978).

The petitioner also asserts that CIS has approved other petitions that have the same facts as the instant case. However, each nonimmigrant proceeding is a separate proceeding with a separate record. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 103.8(d). The decision does not indicate whether the director reviewed the prior approvals of the other nonimmigrant petitions. If the prior nonimmigrant petitions were approved based on the same set of facts that are contained in the current record, the approval would constitute material and gross error on the part of the director. The AAO is not required to approve applications or petitions where eligibility has not been demonstrated, merely because of prior approvals that may have been erroneous. *See, e.g. Matter of Church Scientology International*, 19 I&N Dec. 593, 597 (Comm.1988). It would be absurd to suggest that CIS or any agency must treat acknowledged errors as binding precedent. *Sussex Engg. Ltd v. Montgomery*, 825 F.2d 1084, 1090 (6th Cir. 1987), *cert. denied*, 485 U.S. 1008 (1988). Moreover, the AAO is not bound to follow the contradictory decision of a service center. *Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra v. INS*, 2000 WL 282785 (E.D. La.), *aff'd*, 248 F.3d 1139 (5th Cir. 2001), *cert. denied*, 122 S. Ct 51 (2001).

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

This decision is without prejudice to the filing of a new petition accompanied by the proper documentation and fee.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.