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JUL 18 2007

FILE: [REDACTED] Office: LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA Date:

IN RE: [REDACTED]

PETITION: Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility under section 212(i)
of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(i)

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert P. Wiemann".

Robert P. Wiemann, Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The waiver application was denied by the District Director, Los Angeles, and the matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed. The application will be denied.

The applicant, a citizen of the Philippines, was found inadmissible to the United States under section 212(a)(6)(C)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(C)(i), for seeking to procure a visa, other documentation, or admission into the United States or other benefit provided under the Act by fraud or willful misrepresentation. The applicant is the daughter of a United States citizen and United States permanent resident, and seeks a waiver of inadmissibility pursuant to section 212(i) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(i), in order to remain in the United States with her parents and children.

The district director concluded that the applicant had failed to establish that extreme hardship would be imposed on her parents, the qualifying relatives, and denied the Form I-601, Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility.

On appeal, counsel contends that the applicant's parents would suffer extreme hardship if the applicant were required to return to the Philippines, and submits additional documentation in support of the application. The entire record was reviewed and considered in rendering a decision on the appeal.

Section 212(a)(6)(C) of the Act states, in pertinent part, the following:

- (i) Any alien who, by fraud or willfully misrepresenting a material fact, seeks to procure (or has sought to procure or has procured) a visa, other documentation, or admission into the United States or other benefit provided under this Act is inadmissible.

Section 212(i) of the Act provides that:

The Attorney General [now the Secretary of Homeland Security (Secretary)] may, in the discretion of the Attorney General [Secretary], waive the application of clause (i) of subsection (a)(6)(C) in the case of an alien who is the spouse, son or daughter of a United States citizen or of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, if it is established to the satisfaction of the Attorney General [Secretary] that the refusal of admission to the United States of such immigrant alien would result in extreme hardship to the citizen or lawfully resident spouse or parent of such an alien.

Regarding the applicant's grounds of inadmissibility, the record reflects that she was granted voluntary departure by an immigration judge through January 31, 1996. She departed the United States that day and fraudulently re-entered the United States the following month with a Filipino passport and United States visa issued to another individual.

As the applicant entered the United States via fraud, she is inadmissible to the United States under section 212(a)(6)(C)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(C)(i). The applicant does not dispute her inadmissibility. Rather, she is filing for a waiver of her inadmissibility.

The record contains several references to the hardship that the applicant's children would suffer if the applicant were to depart the United States. However, section 212(i) of the Act provides that a waiver under section 212(a)(6)(C)(i) of the Act is applicable solely where the applicant establishes extreme

hardship to his or her citizen or lawfully resident spouse or parent. Congress specifically does not mention extreme hardship to a United States citizen or lawful permanent resident child. Nor is extreme hardship to the applicant herself a permissible consideration under the statute. In the present case, the applicant's United States citizen father, and lawful permanent resident mother, are the only qualifying relatives, and hardship to the applicant, her husband, or her children cannot be considered, except as it may affect the applicant's mother and father.

Thus, the first issue to be addressed is whether the applicant's return to the Philippines would impose extreme hardship on her parents. If extreme hardship is established, the AAO will then make an assessment as to whether it should exercise discretion in granting the waiver.

Court decisions have repeatedly held that the common results of deportation or exclusion are insufficient to prove extreme hardship. *See Hassan v. INS*, 927 F.2d 465, 468 (9th Cir. 1991). For example, in *Matter of Pilch*, 21 I&N Dec. 627 (BIA 1996), the BIA held that emotional hardship caused by severing family and community ties is a common result of deportation and does not constitute extreme hardship. In *Perez v. INS*, 96 F.3d 390 (9th Cir. 1996), the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit defined "extreme hardship" as hardship that was unusual or beyond that which would normally be expected upon deportation. The Ninth Circuit emphasized that the common results of deportation are insufficient to prove extreme hardship. The United States Supreme Court additionally held in *INS v. Jong Ha Wang*, 450 U.S. 139 (1981), that the mere showing of economic detriment to qualifying family members is insufficient to warrant a finding of extreme hardship.

The concept of extreme hardship to a qualifying relative "is not . . . fixed and inflexible," and whether extreme hardship has been established is determined based on an examination of the facts of each individual case. *Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez*, 22 I&N Dec. 560, 565 (BIA 1999). In *Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez*, the Board of Immigration Appeals set forth a list of non-exclusive factors relevant to determining whether an alien has established extreme hardship to a qualifying relative pursuant to section 212(i) of the Act. These factors include, with respect to the qualifying relative, the presence of family ties to United States citizens or lawful permanent residents in the United States, family ties outside the United States, country conditions where the qualifying relative would relocate and family ties in that country, the financial impact of departure, and significant health conditions, particularly where there is diminished availability of medical care in the country to which the qualifying relative would relocate. *Id.* at 566. In *Matter of O-J-O-*, 21 I&N Dec. 381, 383 (BIA 1996) (citations omitted), the BIA held that:

Relevant factors, though not extreme in themselves, must be considered in the aggregate in determining whether extreme hardship exists. In each case, the trier of fact must consider the entire range of factors concerning hardship in their totality and determine whether the combination of hardships takes the case beyond those hardships ordinarily associated with deportation.

Additionally, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has held that "the most important single hardship factor may be the separation of the alien from family living in the United States," and, "[w]hen the BIA fails to give considerable, if not predominant, weight to the hardship that will result from family separation, it has abused its discretion." *Salcido-Salcido v. INS*, 138 F.3d 1292, 1293 (9th Cir. 1998) (citations omitted). *See also Cerrillo-Perez v. INS*, 809 F.2d 1419, 1424 (9th Cir. 1987) (remanding to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)) ("We have stated in a series of cases that the hardship to the alien resulting from his separation from family members may, in itself, constitute extreme hardship.") (citations omitted). The AAO notes that the present case arises within the jurisdiction of the Ninth Circuit Court of

Appeals. Separation of family will therefore be given the appropriate weight under Ninth Circuit law in the assessment of hardship factors in the present case. Once extreme hardship is established, it is but one favorable factor to be considered in the determination of whether the Secretary should exercise discretion. *See Matter of Mendez*, 21 I&N Dec. 296 (BIA 1996).

The record reflects that the applicant's father is a sixty-nine-year-old citizen of the United States. He has been a citizen since 1990. The applicant's mother is a sixty-eight-year-old lawful permanent resident of the United States; she has been a permanent resident since 1999.

The record contains an affidavit executed by the applicant's parents on December 16, 2003, stating that they would suffer extreme hardship if the applicant were required to return to the Philippines. Specifically, they state that their entire family, including their three other children and eight grandchildren, are in the United States; that the family is very close and sees each other often; that they have lived with the applicant since 2001; that the applicant and her husband are helpful; that their health is beginning to fail; that the applicant's mother suffered from coronary heart failure and a stroke in 2003, and that the applicant took her to the hospital; that the applicant's father suffers back pain and sometimes collapses or passes out; that the applicant and the applicant's husband have called paramedics to take the applicant's father to the hospital due to his back pain; that the applicant's mother and father both suffer from diabetes; that the applicant's father and mother cannot live on their own; and that the applicant's mother and father have a great deal of credit card debt they must pay and could not afford to live on their own. Also submitted were copies of prescription medicine received by the applicant's father on June 28, 2001 and by the applicant's mother on October 31, 2002, February 24, 2003, April 16, 2003, and April 26, 2003.

The record also contains psychiatric evaluations of the applicant's mother and father, prepared by [REDACTED] on October 27, 2005.

Courts considering the impact of financial detriment on a finding of extreme hardship have repeatedly held that, while it must be considered in the overall determination, "[e]conomic disadvantage alone does not constitute "extreme hardship." *Ramirez-Durazo v. INS*, 794 F.2d 491, 497 (9th Cir. 1986) (holding that "lower standard of living in Mexico and the difficulties of readjustment to that culture and environment . . . simply are not sufficient."); *Shoostary v. INS*, 39 F.3d 1049 (9th Cir. 1994) (stating, "the extreme hardship requirement . . . was not enacted to insure that the family members of excludable aliens fulfill their dreams or continue in the lives which they currently enjoy. The uprooting of family, the separation from friends, and other normal processes of readjustment to one's home country after having spent a number of years in the United States are not considered extreme, but represent the type of inconvenience and hardship experienced by the families of most aliens in the respondent's circumstances."); *Matter of Shaughnessy*, 12 I&N Dec. 810 (BIA 1968) (holding that separation of family members and financial difficulties alone do not establish extreme hardship); *INS v. Jong Ha Wang*, 450 U.S. 139 (1981) (upholding BIA finding that economic detriment alone is insufficient to establish extreme hardship).

However, particularly in the Ninth Circuit, courts have recognized that, in certain cases, economic impact combined with related personal and emotional hardships may cause the hardship to rise to the level of extreme. "Included among these are the personal hardships which flow naturally from an economic loss decreased health care, educational opportunities, and general material welfare." *Mejia-Carrillo v. INS*, 656 F.2d 520, 522 (9th cir. 1981) (citations omitted); *see also Santana-Figueroa v. INS*, 644 F.2d 1354, 1358 (9th cir. 1981) ("Economic loss often accompanies deportation. Even a significant reduction in

standard of living is not, by itself, a basis for relief. . . . But deportation may also result in the loss of all that makes life possible. When an alien would be deprived of the means to survive, or condemned to exist in life-threatening squalor, the “economic” character of the hardship makes it no less severe.”)

The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has stated that, “the most important single hardship factor may be the separation of the alien from family living in the United States,” and also that, “[w]hen the BIA fails to give considerable, if not predominant, weight to the hardship that will result from family separation, it has abused its discretion.” *Salcido-Salcido v. INS*, 138 F.3d 1292, 1293 (9th Cir. 1998) (citations omitted). See also *Cerrillo-Perez v. INS*, 809 F.2d 1419, 1424 (9th Cir. 1987) (remanding to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA)) (“We have stated in a series of cases that the hardship to the alien resulting from his separation from family members may, in itself, constitute extreme hardship.”) (citations omitted). Separation of family will therefore be given the appropriate weight under Ninth Circuit law in the assessment of hardship factors in the present case.

The uprooting of family, the separation from friends, and other normal processes of readjustment to one’s home country after having spent a number of years in the United States are not considered extreme, but represent the type of inconvenience and hardship experienced by the families of most aliens in the respondent’s circumstances.”); *Matter of Shaughnessy*, 12 I&N Dec. 810 (BIA 1968) (holding that separation of family members and financial difficulties alone do not establish extreme hardship); *INS v. Jong Ha Wang*, 450 U.S. 139 (1981) (upholding BIA finding that economic detriment alone is insufficient to establish extreme hardship). Courts considering the impact of financial detriment on a finding of extreme hardship have repeatedly held that, while it must be considered in the overall determination, “[e]conomic disadvantage alone does not constitute “extreme hardship.” *Ramirez-Durazo v. INS*, 794 F.2d 491, 497 (9th Cir. 1986) (holding that “lower standard of living in Mexico and the difficulties of readjustment to that culture and environment . . . simply are not sufficient.”); *Shoostary v. INS*, 39 F.3d 1049 (9th Cir. 1994) (stating, “the extreme hardship requirement . . . was not enacted to insure that the family members of excludable aliens fulfill their dreams or continue in the lives which they currently enjoy”).

In the instant case, the applicant is required to demonstrate that her mother and father would face extreme hardship in the event the applicant is required to return to the Philippines, regardless of whether they accompany her to the Philippines or remain in the United States.

The record, reviewed in its entirety and in light of the *Cervantes-Gonzalez* factors, cited above, does not support a finding that the applicant’s mother and father will face extreme hardship if the applicant returns to the Philippines. If they remain in the United States without the applicant, the record fails to establish that they would face greater hardship than the unfortunate, but expected, disruptions, inconveniences, and difficulties arising whenever a son or daughter is removed from the United States or refused admission. As presently constituted, the record fails to establish that the financial strain and emotional hardship she would face would be any greater than that normally be expected upon separation. The record contains no documentary evidence to support the claims made by the applicant’s parents regarding their medical conditions or that they could not manage their daily affairs in the applicant’s absence. Going on record without supporting documentary evidence is not sufficient for purposes of meeting the burden of proof in these proceedings. *Matter of Soffici*, 22 I&N Dec. 158, 165 (Comm. 1998) (citing *Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972)). Nor has the applicant established why her parents other two daughters or sons, who are claimed to be United States citizens, would be unable to assist their parents in the applicant’s absence. The presence of these relatives in the United States further diminishes the claim that separation from the applicant would be harder for her parents than for other

parents in similar situations. Moreover, the AAO notes that, in their 2003 affidavit, the applicant's parents stated that they live with the applicant. However, [REDACTED] states in his 2005 letter that the applicant's mother sees the applicant every week and speak on the telephone daily. This indicates either contradictory evidence in the record or a change in living conditions. It is incumbent upon the petitioner to resolve any inconsistencies in the record by independent objective evidence. Any attempt to explain or reconcile such inconsistencies will not suffice unless the petitioner submits competent objective evidence pointing to where the truth lies. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582, 591-92 (BIA 1988).

While counsel asserts that the applicant's mother and father would experience extreme hardship because they state that the family is extremely close and that they would be grief-stricken without their daughter, the record does not establish that they would be any more grief-stricken than other parents would be at the prospect of a daughter's deportation or removal. Nor has the applicant included any information to establish, or even assert, that her parents would experience extreme hardship if they accompanied her to the Philippines.

Nor do the letters from [REDACTED] establish extreme hardship. Although the input of any mental health professional is respected and valuable, the AAO notes that the submitted letters are based on single interviews between [REDACTED] and each of the applicant's parents. The record fails to reflect an ongoing relationship between a mental health professional and the applicant's parents or any history of treatment for the depressive and anxiety disorders he found in each. Moreover, the conclusions reached in the submitted evaluation, being based on a single interview, do not reflect the insight and elaboration commensurate with an established relationship with a psychologist, thereby rendering the psychologist's findings speculative and diminishing the evaluation's value to a determination of extreme hardship.¹

In limiting the availability of the waiver to cases of "extreme hardship," Congress specifically provided that a waiver is not available in every case where a qualifying family relationship exists. As noted previously, United States court decisions have repeatedly held that the common results of removal are insufficient to prove extreme hardship. *See Hassan v. INS*, 927 F.2d 465, 468 (9th Cir. 1991), *Perez v. INS*, 96 F.3d 390 (9th Cir. 1996); *Matter of Pilch*, 21 I&N Dec. 627 (BIA 1996) (holding that emotional hardship caused by severing family and community ties is a common result of deportation and does not constitute extreme hardship); *Matter of Shaughnessy*, 12 I&N Dec. 810 (BIA 1968) (holding that separation of family members and financial difficulties alone do not establish extreme hardship). "[O]nly in cases of great actual or prospective injury . . . will the bar be removed." *Matter of Ngai*, 19 I&N Dec. 245, 246 (BIA 1984). Further, demonstrated financial difficulties alone are generally insufficient to establish extreme hardship. *See INS v. Jong Ha Wang*, 450 U.S. 139 (1981) (upholding BIA finding that economic detriment alone is insufficient to establish extreme hardship). The AAO finds that the district director properly denied this waiver application. In adjudicating this petition, the AAO finds that the record fails to demonstrate that the applicant's parents would suffer hardship beyond that normally expected upon the removal of a son or daughter.

¹ The AAO finds unconvincing [REDACTED]'s statement at page 3 of his evaluation of the applicant's mother's mental health that she had first learned of the possibility that the applicant would not receive her green card and be deported to the Philippines in 2004, and fell thereafter into a state of depression and anxiety. The record establishes that the applicant's husband's application for asylum was denied in 1994, and the applicant was placed into deportation proceedings in or around 1995 and, as noted previously, was granted voluntary departure through January 1996. She returned to the Philippines in 1996 and then fraudulently re-entered the United States a short time later.

A review of the documentation in the record, when considered in its totality, reflects that the applicant has failed to show that her parents would suffer hardship unusual or beyond that normally expected upon removal of a son or daughter. As noted previously, the common results of deportation or exclusion are insufficient to prove extreme hardship; the emotional hardship caused by severing family and community ties and the financial hardship that results from separation are common results of deportation and do not constitute extreme hardship. "Extreme hardship" has been defined as hardship that is unusual or beyond that which would normally be expected upon deportation. Having found the applicant statutorily ineligible for relief, no purpose would be served in discussing whether the applicant merits a waiver as a matter of discretion.

In proceedings for application for waiver of grounds of inadmissibility under section 212(i), the burden of establishing that the application merits approval remains entirely with the applicant. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. The applicant has sustained not that burden. Accordingly, the AAO will not disturb the director's denial of the waiver application.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. The waiver application is denied.