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20 Mass. Ave., N.W., Rm. 3000
Washington, DC 20529-2090
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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

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FILE:

MSC-06-035-12862

Office: ATLANTA

Date: NOV 25 2008

IN RE:

Applicant:

APPLICATION:

Application for Status as a Temporary Resident pursuant to Section 245A of the
Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. If your appeal was dismissed or rejected, all documents have been returned to the National Benefits Center. You no longer have a case pending before this office, and you are not entitled to file a motion to reopen or reconsider your case. If your appeal was sustained or remanded for further action, you will be contacted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John F. Grissom".

John F. Grissom, Acting Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application for temporary resident status pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreements reached in *Catholic Social Services, Inc., et al., v. Ridge, et al.*, CIV. NO. S-86-1343-LKK (E.D. Cal) January 23, 2004, and *Felicity Mary Newman, et al., v. United States Immigration and Citizenship Services, et al.*, CIV. NO. 87-4757-WDK (C.D. Cal) February 17, 2004 (CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements), was denied by the Director, Atlanta. The decision is now before the Administrative Appeals Office on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant submitted a Form I-687, Application for Status as a Temporary Resident under Section 245A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Act), and a Form I-687 Supplement, CSS/Newman Class Membership Worksheet. The director determined that the applicant had not established by a preponderance of the evidence that he had continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status for the duration of the requisite period. The director noted that although the applicant had demonstrated his presence in the United States prior to January 1, 1982, he had failed to submit evidence sufficient to establish his continuous unlawful residence in the United States throughout the requisite period. The director denied the application finding that the applicant had not met his burden of proof and that he was therefore not eligible to adjust to temporary resident status pursuant to the terms of the CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements.

On appeal, counsel asserts that the director's decision is contrary to the evidence submitted by the applicant, and that the evidence in fact supports the applicant's claim of continuous unlawful residence in the United States throughout the requisite period.

An applicant for temporary resident status must establish entry into the United States before January 1, 1982, and continuous residence in the United States in an unlawful status since such date and through the date the application is filed. Section 245A(a)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a(a)(2). The applicant must also establish that he or she has been continuously physically present in the United States since November 6, 1986. Section 245A(a)(3) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a(a)(3). The regulations clarify that the applicant must have been physically present in the United States from November 6, 1986 until the date of filing the application. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(b).

For purposes of establishing residence and physical presence under the CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements, the term "until the date of filing" in 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(b) means until the date the applicant attempted to file a completed Form I-687 application and fee or was caused not to timely file during the original legalization application period of May 5, 1987 to May 4, 1988. See CSS Settlement Agreement paragraph 11 at page 6; Newman Settlement Agreement paragraph 11 at page 10.

An alien shall be regarded as having resided continuously in the United States if at the time of filing an application for temporary resident status, no single absence from the United States has exceeded forty-five (45) days, and the aggregate of all absences has not exceeded one hundred and eighty (180) days between January 1, 1982, through the date the application is filed, unless the alien can establish that due to emergent reasons the return to the United States could not be

accomplished within the time period allowed, the alien was maintaining residence in the United States, and the departure was not based on an order of deportation. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(h)(1).

If the applicant's absence exceeded the 45-day period allowed for a single absence, it must be determined if the untimely return of the applicant to the United States was due to an "emergent reason." Although this term is not defined in the regulations, *Matter of C-*, 19 I&N Dec. 808 (Comm. 1988), holds that emergent means "coming unexpectedly into being."

The applicant has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she has resided in the United States for the requisite period, is admissible to the United States under the provisions of section 245A of the Act, and is otherwise eligible for adjustment of status. The inference to be drawn from the documentation provided shall depend on the extent of the documentation, its credibility and amenability to verification. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5).

Although the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3) provides an illustrative list of contemporaneous documents that an applicant may submit in support of his or her claim of continuous residence in the United States in an unlawful status since prior to January 1, 1982, the submission of any other relevant document is permitted pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(vi)(L).

The "preponderance of the evidence" standard requires that the evidence demonstrate that the applicant's claim is "probably true," where the determination of "truth" is made based on the factual circumstances of each individual case. *Matter of E-M-*, 20 I&N Dec. 77, 79-80 (Comm. 1989). In evaluating the evidence, *Matter of E-M-* also stated that "[t]ruth is to be determined not by the quantity of evidence alone but by its quality." *Id.* at 80. Thus, in adjudicating the application pursuant to the preponderance of the evidence standard, the director must examine each piece of evidence for relevance, probative value, and credibility, both individually and within the context of the totality of the evidence, to determine whether the fact to be proven is probably true.

Even if the director has some doubt as to the truth, if the petitioner submits relevant, probative, and credible evidence that leads the director to believe that the claim is "probably true" or "more likely than not," the applicant or petitioner has satisfied the standard of proof. *See U.S. v. Cardozo-Fonseca*, 480 U.S. 421, 431 (1987) (defining "more likely than not" as a greater than 50 percent probability of something occurring). If the director can articulate a material doubt, it is appropriate for the director to either request additional evidence or, if that doubt leads the director to believe that the claim is probably not true, deny the application or petition.

At issue in this proceeding is whether the applicant has submitted sufficient credible evidence to meet his burden of establishing continuous unlawful residence in the United States throughout the requisite period. Although the record of proceeding demonstrates the applicant's presence in the United States prior to January 1, 1982, he has failed to meet the burden of establishing continuous unlawful residence throughout the requisite period.

The record of proceeding shows that the applicant submitted a Form I-687 Application and Supplement to Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS), on November 4, 2005. The applicant submitted the following documentation relevant to the statutory period:

- A copy of a medical report dated December 27, 1985;
- A copy of a credit report with handwritten dates from 1985 to 1987;
- A copy of the applicant's Wisconsin's operator's license number [REDACTED] with an expiration date in 1980; and,
- A copy of a report from the Illinois Driver Services Dept. annotated with the statement that the Illinois driving license number [REDACTED] was issued in the last quarter of 1985.

In denying the application the director noted that the applicant had failed to submit sufficient evidence to establish his continuous unlawful residence in the United States throughout the requisite period.

On appeal, counsel asserts that the applicant has submitted sufficient evidence to establish his continuous unlawful residence in the United States.

In the instant case, the applicant has failed to provide sufficient, credible and probative evidence to establish his continuous unlawful residence in the United States throughout the requisite period. He has failed to overcome the issues raised by the director. Although the evidence of record demonstrates the applicant's presence in the United States during the latter part of 1985, it is insufficient to show his continuous residence in this country from January 1, 1982 to the latter part of 1985, and from 1986 to the time the applicant states he attempted to apply for legalization. It is further noted by the AAO that the applicant provided a declaration dated October 6, 2006 in response to the director's Notice of Intent to Deny in which he stated, "I was continuously physically present in the United States, except for a brief departure, from November 6, 1986 to June 1987 when I was 'front-desked'." Based upon the applicant's own admission, he was absent from the United States for more than 45 days, and there is no evidence to show that the absence was due to emergent reasons. As noted above, a single absence from the United States in excess of 45 days during the statutory period will break the continuity of residence required for eligibility under the legalization provisions. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(h)(1).

The AAO notes further that the applicant submitted inconsistent information about his driver's license [REDACTED]. One document of record indicates that this number was issued in the state of Wisconsin with an expiration date of 1980. A second document indicates that the exact same driver's license number was issued to the applicant by the state of Illinois. It is unlikely that two different states will issue the same driver's license number to the same person. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582, 591-92 (BIA 1988).

The absence of sufficiently detailed documentation to corroborate the applicant's claim of continuous residence for the entire requisite period seriously detracts from the credibility of this claim. Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5), the inference to be drawn from the documentation provided shall depend on the extent of the documentation, its credibility and amenability to verification. Given the applicant's reliance upon documents with minimal probative value, it is concluded that he has failed to establish continuous residence in an unlawful status in the United States for the requisite period under both 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5) and *Matter of E- M--*, *supra*. The applicant is, therefore, ineligible for temporary resident status under section 245A of the Act on this basis.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. This decision constitutes a final notice of ineligibility.