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U.S. Citizenship
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FILE:

Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date: **JAN 22 2008**

[EAC 06 341 73946]

INRE: Applicant:

APPLICATION: Application for Temporary Protected Status under Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.c. § 1254

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT: 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.

John H. Vaughan
for Robert P. Wiemann, Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

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

The applicant, who claims to be a native and citizen of El Salvador, is seeking Temporary Protected Status (TPS) under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1254.

The director denied the application because the applicant failed to establish his nationality and identity, as well as his eligibility for late registration. The director also found that the applicant had failed to establish his **qualifying** continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite time periods.

On appeal, the applicant submits a brief statement.

Section 244(c) of the Act, and the related regulations in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2, provide that an applicant who is a national of a foreign state is eligible for Temporary Protected Status only if such alien establishes that he:

- (a) Is a national, as defined in section IOI(a)(21) of the Act, of a foreign state designated under section 244(b) of the Act;
- (b) Has been continuously physically present in the United States since the effective date of the most recent designation of that foreign state;
- (c) Has continuously resided in the United States since such date as the Attorney General may designate;
- (d) Is admissible as an immigrant except as provided under § 244.3;
- (e) Is not ineligible under § 244.4; and
- (t)
 - (1) Registers for Temporary Protected Status during the initial registration period announced by public notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER, or
 - (2) During any subsequent extension of such designation if at the time of the initial registration period:
 - (i) The applicant is a nonimmigrant or has been granted voluntary departure status or any relief from removal;
 - (ii) The applicant has an application for change of status, adjustment of status, asylum, voluntary departure, or any relief from removal which is pending or subject to further review or appeal;

- (iii) The applicant is a parolee or has a pending request for reparole; or
 - (iv) The applicant is a spouse or child of an alien currently eligible to be a TPS registrant.
- (g) Has filed an application for late registration with the appropriate Service director, within a 60-day period immediately following the expiration or termination of conditions described in paragraph (f)(2) of this section.

The phrase continuously physically present, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means actual physical presence in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous physical presence in the United States by virtue of brief, casual, and innocent absences as defined within this section.

The phrase continuously resided, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means residing in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous residence in the United States by reason of a brief, casual and innocent absence as defined within this section or due merely to a brief temporary trip abroad required by emergency or extenuating circumstances outside the control of the alien.

Persons applying for TPS offered to El Salvadorans must demonstrate continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, and continuous physical presence since March 9, 2001. The initial registration period for Salvadorans was from March 9, 2001, through September 9, 2002. The applicant filed his Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status, with Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) on August 15, 2006 - almost four years after the initial registration period had ended.

To qualify for late registration, the applicant must provide evidence that during the initial registration period he fell within at least one of the provisions described in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2(t)(2) above.

The burden of proof is upon the applicant to establish that he meets the above requirements. Applicants shall submit all documentation as required in the instructions or requested by CIS. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(a). The sufficiency of all evidence will be judged according to its relevancy, consistency, credibility, and probative value. To meet his burden of proof the applicant must provide supporting documentary evidence of eligibility apart from his own statements. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b).

In support of his initial application, the applicant submitted a photocopy of an abstract of his birth certificate, with English translation.

On October 31, 2006, the director requested the applicant to submit evidence establishing his nationality and identity, and his eligibility for late registration as set forth in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2(1)(2). The applicant was also requested to submit evidence to establish his qualifying continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite time periods. The applicant was informed that such

evidence may include, but was not limited to, employment or school records, rent/mortgage payment receipts, bank or insurance documents, medical or utility bills, or other similar materials. In response, the applicant submitted letters from acquaintances, his pastor and landlord.

The director determined that the applicant had failed to establish his nationality and identity, his eligibility for late registration, and his qualifying continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite time periods. The director denied the application on June 13, 2007.

On appeal, the applicant states that he needs to work legally in the United States in order to financially support his family.

The applicant has not submitted any evidence to establish that he has met any of the criteria for late registration described in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2(f)(2). Consequently, the decision of the director to deny the application on the ground that the applicant failed to establish his eligibility for late registration will be affirmed.

The applicant claims to have lived continuously in the United States since July 4, 2000. It is reasonable to expect that he would have a variety of contemporaneous evidence to support this claim. Letters from acquaintances are not, by themselves, persuasive evidence of continuous residence and continuous physical presence. The letter from the applicant's pastor has little evidentiary weight or probative value as it does not provide the specific date that the applicant was officially registered as a parishioner at his church. Furthermore, the landlord's letter is not supported by objective evidence, such as rent receipts and/or a lease agreement.

It is concluded that the documentation submitted by the applicant does not include sufficient evidence to establish his qualifying continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, and continuous physical presence in the United States from March 9, 2001, to the date of filing his application in August 2006. Consequently, the director's decision to deny the application on these grounds will also be affirmed.

The applicant has also failed to submit sufficient evidence to establish his nationality and identity, as required under the provisions of 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(a)(1). Therefore, the application must be denied for this reason, as well.

The application will be denied for the above stated reasons, with each considered as an independent and alternative basis for denial. An alien applying for Temporary Protected Status has the burden of proving that he or she meets the requirements enumerated above and is otherwise eligible under the provisions of section 244 of the Act. The applicant has failed to meet this burden.

It is noted that an Immigration Judge in El Paso, Texas, ordered the applicant removed from the United States on May 6, 1998, under alien registration number _____ . The applicant was removed to El Salvador on May 20, 1998.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.