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U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

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FILE: [redacted] Office: LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA Date: JUN 09 2004

IN RE: Applicant: [redacted]

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

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:

[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

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

The record reflects that the applicant is a native and citizen of the Philippines. She was found to be inadmissible to the United States pursuant to section 212(a)(6)(C)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(C)(i), for having procured admission into the United States by fraud and willful misrepresentation of a material fact. The applicant is the beneficiary of an approved Petition for Alien Relative filed by her naturalized U.S. citizen spouse. She 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 and reside with her U.S. citizen spouse, child and Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) parents.

The Interim District Director concluded that the applicant had failed to establish that extreme hardship would be imposed on a qualifying relative. The application was denied accordingly. *See Interim District Director Decision* dated May 1, 2003.

Section 212(a)(6)(C) of the Act provides, in pertinent part, that:

> (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:

> (1) 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.

After reviewing the amendments to the Act regarding fraud and misrepresentation and after noting the increased impediments Congress has placed on such activities, including the narrowing of the parameters for eligibility, the re-inclusion of the perpetual bar, eliminating alien parents of U.S. citizens and resident aliens as applicants and eliminating children as a consideration in determining the presence of extreme hardship, it is concluded that Congress has placed a high priority on reducing and/or stopping fraud and misrepresentation related to immigration and other matters.

To recapitulate, the record clearly reflects that the applicant obtained a Philippine passport that did not belong to her and on December 19, 1993, she presented that passport at the Los Angeles, CA International Airport where she was admitted as a nonimmigrant visitor for pleasure. The applicant remained in the United States beyond her authorized stay and married a now naturalized U.S. citizen on May 21, 1996.

Section 212(i) of the Act provides that a waiver of the bar to admission resulting from section 212(a)(6)(C) of the Act is dependent first upon a showing that the bar imposes an extreme hardship on a qualifying family member. 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).

In the present case, the applicant must demonstrate extreme hardship to her U.S. citizen spouse or LPR parents.

Counsel asserts that due to their different purposes and scope, the extreme hardship standards set forth in past suspension of deportation and section 212(h), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(h) legal cases, should not be applied to immigration cases involving section 212(i) of the Act. Counsel implies that the inadmissibility bar under section 212(a)(6)(C) of the Act is less serious than criminal or deportation based grounds addressed in suspension of deportation or section 212(h) proceedings, and that the standard for extreme hardship under section 212(i) should thus be construed more broadly. The AAO notes that the fact that laws in recent years have limited rather than extended the relief available to aliens who have committed fraud or misrepresentations goes contrary to counsel's assertion that section 212(i) waivers should be broadly applied.

In addition to significant amendments made to the Act in 1996 by IIRIRA Congress expanded the reach of the grounds of inadmissibility in the Immigration Marriage Fraud Amendments of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-639, and redesignated as section 212(a)(6)(C) of the Act by the Immigration Act of 1990 (Pub. L. No. 101-649, Nov. 29, 1990, 104 Stat. 5067). Moreover, the Act of 1990 imposed a statutory bar on those who make oral or written misrepresentations in seeking admission into the United States and on those who make material misrepresentations in seeking admission into the United States or in seeking "other benefits" provided under the Act. In 1990, section 274C of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1324C. was added by the Immigration Act of 1990 (Pub. L. No. 101-649, *supra*) for persons or entities that have committed violations on or after November 29, 1990. Section 274C(a) states that it is unlawful for any person or entity knowingly "[t]o use, attempt to use, possess, obtain, accept, or receive or to provide any forged, counterfeit, altered, or falsely made document in order to satisfy any requirement of this Act." Moreover, in 1994, Congress passed the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act (Pub. L. No. 103-322, September 13, 1994) which enhanced the criminal penalties of certain offenses, including "impersonation in entry document or admission application; evading or trying to evade immigration laws using assumed or fictitious name." *See 18 U.S.C. § 1546.*

Moreover, the Board of Immigration Appeals (Board) stated in *Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez,* 22 I&N Dec. 560 (BIA 1999) that:

> Although it is, for the most part, prudent to avoid cross application between different types of relief of particular principles or standards, we find the factors articulated in cases involving suspension of deportation and other waivers of inadmissibility to be helpful, given that both forms of relief require extreme hardship and the exercise of discretion.

Referring to numerous court decisions that interpreted the term "extreme hardship" for waiver and suspension of deportation purposes, the Board then outlined the following factors it deemed relevant to determining extreme hardship to a qualifying relative in section 212(i) waiver cases:

> The factors deemed relevant in determining extreme hardship to a qualifying relative include, but are not limited to, the following: the presence of lawful permanent resident or United States citizen family ties to this country; the qualifying relative's family ties outside the United States; the conditions in the country or countries to which the qualifying relative

> would relocate and the extent of the qualifying relative's ties to such countries; the financial impact of departure from this country; and finally, significant conditions of health, particularly when tied to an unavailability of suitable medical care in the country to which the qualifying relative would relocate.

Cervantes-Gonzalez at 565-566. (Citations omitted).

On appeal, counsel states that Citizen and Immigration Services, (CIS) failed to correctly assess the extreme hardship the applicant's spouse would suffer if the applicant's waiver application is denied and she is forced to depart the country. Counsel submits a brief, an affidavit from the applicant's spouse (Mr. and her parents. In his affidavit Mr. states that if the applicant is forced to leave the United States he will be forced to make a decision of either relocating to the Philippines with the applicant or staying in the United States to live with his child. Mr. states that he would suffer extreme hardship due to the unstable political, social and economic conditions in the Philippines and having to separate from his family (brothers and sisters) who live in the United States. Mr. further states that he would lose his job and that would cause financial hardship because he does not have any job prospects in the Philippines and therefore he would not be able to maintain his standard of living and support his family.

In the brief counsel states that if Mr. is forced to leave the United States and relocate with his spouse and child in the Philippines, his child would suffer hardship due to the lack of adequate educational opportunities and medical facilities. No independent corroboration was provided to indicate that educational opportunities as well as adequate medical facilities are unavailable in the Philippines.

There are no laws that require Mr. or his child to leave the United States and live abroad. In *Silverman v. Rogers*, 437 F. 2d 102 (1st Cir. 1970), the court stated that, "even assuming that the Federal Government had no right either to prevent a marriage or destroy it, we believe that here it has done nothing more than to say that the residence of one of the marriage partners may not be in the United States." The uprooting of family and separation from friends does not necessarily amount to extreme hardship but rather represents the type of inconvenience and hardship experienced by the families of most aliens being deported. *See Shooshtary v. INS,* 39 F. 3d 1049 (9th Cir. 1994).

In the brief counsel states that the applicant's father suffers from hypertension, high cholesterol, a swollen prostate and was recently treated for a urinary tract infection. Additionally, her mother suffers from hypertension, high cholesterol and has glaucoma. Both are taking medication. Counsel states that the applicant is of great help to her parents, taking them to doctors appointments and monitoring their special diets and medications, and they will suffer great hardship if the applicant is forced to return to the Philippines. No documentary evidence was provided to substantiate the claim that the applicant's parents cannot take care of themselves and their daily chores. While numerous medical documents were submitted there was no comprehensive analysis in laymen's terms by a competent medical professional which would allow the AAO to evaluate the extent of their reliance on the applicant.

The BIA noted in *Cervantes-Gonzalez,* that the alien's wife knew that he was in deportation proceedings at the time they were married. The BIA stated that this factor went to the wife's expectations at the time they wed because she was aware she might have to face the decision of parting from the husband or follow him to Mexico in the event he was ordered deported. The BIA found this to undermine the alien's argument that his wife would suffer extreme hardship if he were deported. *Id.*

In the present case, it appears that Mr. [redacted] must have been aware of the applicant's immigration violation and the possibility of being removed at the time of their marriage on February 22, 1992.

Counsel further states that CIS did not balance the favorable factors against adverse factors required to decide whether a waiver is merited in the Secretary's discretion.

Before the AAO can look into the favorable and unfavorable factors in this case it must first determine if the qualifying family member would suffer extreme hardship if the applicant's waiver application was not approved.

U.S. 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 (9th Cir. 1991). For example, *Matter of Pilch,* 21 I&N Dec. 627 (BIA 1996), held that emotional hardship caused by severing family and community ties is a common result of deportation and does not constitute extreme hardship. In addition, *Perez v. INS,* 96 F.3d 390 (9th Cir. 1996), held that the common results of deportation are insufficient to prove extreme hardship and defined "extreme hardship" as hardship that was unusual or beyond that which would normally be expected upon deportation. *Hassan v. INS, supra,* held further that the uprooting of family and separation from friends does not necessarily amount to extreme hardship but rather represents the type of inconvenience and hardship experienced by the families of most aliens being deported. The U.S. 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 issues in this matter were thoroughly discussed by the interim district director in her present decision. A review of the documentation in the record, when considered in its totality reflects that the applicant has failed to show that her qualifying family members would suffer extreme hardship if she were removed from the United States. 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) of the Act, the burden of proving eligibility remains entirely with the applicant. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. Here, the applicant has not met that burden. Accordingly, the appeal will be dismissed.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.