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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of Administrative Appeals MS 2090
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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

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SEP 17 2009

FILE:

[REDACTED]
(CDJ 2004 759 868)

Office: MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
(CIUDAD JUAREZ)

Date:

IN RE:

APPLICATION:

[REDACTED]
Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility under section 212(a)(9)(B) of the
Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(B)

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.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen. Please refer to 8 C.F.R. § 103.5 for the specific requirements. All motions must be submitted to the office that originally decided your case by filing a Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$585. Any motion must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen, as required by 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i).

John F. Grissom
Acting Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

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

The applicant is a native and citizen of Mexico who was found to be inadmissible to the United States under section 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(II) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(B)(i)(II), for having been unlawfully present in the United States for more than one year and seeking readmission within ten years of her last departure from the United States. The applicant is married to a United States citizen. She seeks a waiver of inadmissibility in order to reside in the United States with her spouse and their United States citizen children.

The District Director found that, based on the evidence in the record, the applicant had failed to establish extreme hardship to her qualifying relative. The application was denied accordingly. *Decision of the Officer in Charge*, dated October 6, 2006.

On appeal, counsel contends that United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) did not properly consider all of the hardship factors in the record and that the applicant's spouse would suffer extreme hardship. *Form I-290B and attached brief*.

In support of these assertions, counsel submits a brief. The record includes, but is not limited to, a statement from the applicant's spouse. The entire record was reviewed and considered in rendering a decision on the appeal.

Section 212(a)(9)(B) of the Act provides, in pertinent part:

(B) Aliens Unlawfully Present.-

(i) In general. - Any alien (other than an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence) who-

(II) has been unlawfully present in the United States for one year or more, and who again seeks admission within 10 years of the date of such alien's departure or removal from the United States, is inadmissible.

....

(v) Waiver. - The Attorney General [now the Secretary of Homeland Security (Secretary)] has sole discretion to waive clause (i) in the case of an immigrant who is the spouse or 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 such immigrant alien would result in extreme hardship to the citizen or lawfully resident spouse or parent of such alien.

In the present case, the record indicates that the applicant entered the United States without inspection in January 2000 and remained until October 2005, voluntarily departing to Mexico. *Consular Notes, American Consulate General, Ciudad Juarez, Mexico*, dated October 27, 2005. The applicant, therefore, accrued unlawful presence from January 2000 until she departed the United States in October 2005. In applying for an immigrant visa, the applicant is seeking admission within ten years of her October 2005 departure from the United States. The applicant is, therefore, inadmissible to the United States under section 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(II) of the Act for being unlawfully present in the United States for a period of more than one year.

A section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) waiver of the bar to admission resulting from a violation of section 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(II) of the Act are dependent first upon a showing that the bar imposes an extreme hardship to the citizen or lawfully resident spouse or parent of the applicant. The plain language of the statute indicates that hardship that the applicant or her children would experience as a result of her inadmissibility is not directly relevant to the determination as to whether she is eligible for a waiver. The only directly relevant hardship in the present case is hardship suffered by the applicant's spouse if the applicant is found to be inadmissible. Hardship to a non-qualifying relative will be considered to the extent that it affects the applicant's spouse. If 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).

Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez, 22 I&N Dec. 560 (BIA 1999) provides a list of factors the Board of Immigration Appeals deems relevant in determining whether an alien has established extreme hardship pursuant to section 212(i) of the Act. These factors include the presence of a 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 in such countries; the financial impact of departure from this country; and significant conditions of health, particularly when tied to an unavailability of suitable medical care in the country to which the qualifying relative would relocate.

The AAO notes that extreme hardship to the applicant's spouse must be established whether he resides in Mexico or the United States, as he is not required to reside outside the United States based on the denial of the applicant's waiver request. The AAO will consider the relevant factors in adjudication of this case.

If the applicant's spouse travels with the applicant to Mexico, the applicant needs to establish that her spouse will suffer extreme hardship. The applicant's spouse was born in the United States. *Birth certificate*. The record does not address whether he has any cultural ties or family members in Mexico. Counsel states that relocation to Mexico is not an option. *Attorney's brief*. He notes that the applicant's spouse has lived his entire life in the United States and would have to give up solid

employment, which he has maintained for several years. *Id.* Counsel cites a 2005 country conditions report published by the United States Department of State that indicates that Mexico suffers from very high unemployment rates and the average daily wage is \$4.50. *Id.* Counsel further asserts that even if the applicant's spouse were to find employment in Mexico, his income would not be sufficient to take care of his family, which includes his immediate family, his elderly parents, and his widowed mother-in-law in Mexico. *Id.* While the AAO acknowledges counsel's assertions, it notes that the record does not include a copy of the country conditions report to which counsel cites. Furthermore, the record does not include statements from the applicant's spouse's elderly parents and his widowed mother-in-law or any other type of evidence to establish their financial dependence upon the applicant's spouse. The record also fails to include documentation, such as utility bills, mortgage or rent statements, and credit card bills, regarding the applicant's spouse's expenses. Without supporting documentation, the assertions of counsel are not sufficient to meet the burden of proof in these proceedings. **The assertions of counsel do not constitute evidence.** *Matter of Obaigbena*, 19 I&N Dec. 533, 534 (BIA 1988); *Matter of Laureano*, 19 I&N Dec. 1 (BIA 1983); *Matter of Ramirez-Sanchez*, 17 I&N Dec. 503, 506 (BIA 1980). The applicant's spouse contends that his children would not have adequate health benefits or educational opportunities in Mexico. *Statement from the applicant's spouse*, dated January 13, 2006. While the AAO acknowledges this assertion, it notes that the applicant's children are not qualifying relatives for the purposes of this case and that any hardship experienced by the applicant's children will be analyzed only to the extent that it affects the applicant's spouse, the only qualifying relative. The record, however, does not address how hardship to the applicant's children would affect the applicant's spouse. When looking at the aforementioned factors, the AAO does not find that the applicant has demonstrated extreme hardship to her spouse if he were to reside in Mexico.

If the applicant's spouse resides in the United States, the applicant needs to establish that her spouse will suffer extreme hardship. As previously noted, the applicant's spouse was born in the United States. *Birth certificate*. The applicant's spouse states that separation from the applicant would jeopardize his job and everything he has worked so hard to accomplish. *Statement from the applicant*, dated January 13, 2006. He notes that he would have to quit his job in order to stay home and take care of the children. *Id.* While the AAO acknowledges these statements, it notes that the record does not address whether there are family members in the United States who could assist the applicant's spouse with childcare responsibilities. The record also fails to include earning statements or tax returns demonstrating that the income of the applicant's spouse would not be sufficient to pay for childcare services. Going on record without supporting documentary evidence will not meet the burden of proof of this proceeding. *See 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)).

The applicant's spouse notes that separation from the applicant and their children would be devastating to all of them. *Statement from the applicant's spouse*, dated January 13, 2006. The AAO acknowledges the difficulties faced by the applicant's spouse. However, 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, 468 (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 hardship experienced by the families of most aliens being removed. Separation from a loved one is a normal result of the removal process. The AAO recognizes that the applicant's spouse will endure hardship as a result of his separation from the applicant. However, the record does not distinguish his situation, if he remains in the United States, from that of other individuals separated as a result of removal. Accordingly, it does not establish that the hardship experienced by the applicant's spouse would rise to the level of extreme hardship. When looking at the aforementioned factors, the AAO does not find that the applicant has demonstrated extreme hardship to her spouse if she were to reside in the United States.

Having found the applicant statutorily ineligible for relief, no purpose would be served in discussing whether she merits a waiver as a matter of discretion.

In proceedings for application for waiver of grounds of inadmissibility under section 212(a)(9)(B) of the Act, the burden of proving eligibility remains entirely with the applicant. *See* 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.