

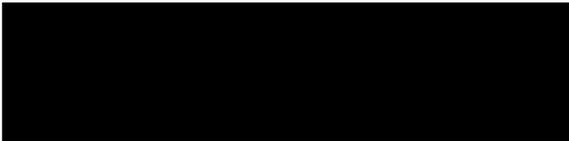
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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of Administrative Appeals
20 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090



U.S. Citizenship
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DATE: **MAR 12 2012**

OFFICE: LOS ANGELES

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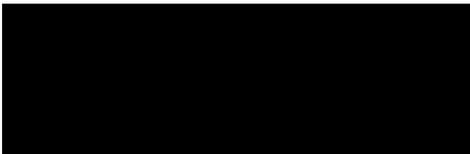


IN RE:



APPLICATION: 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 APPLICANT:



INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosed please find the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All of the documents related to this matter have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Please be advised that any further inquiry that you might have concerning your case must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied by us in reaching our decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen. The specific requirements for filing such a request can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. 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 \$630. Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires that any motion must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

for

Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The waiver application was denied by the Field Office Director, Los Angeles, 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 Mexico who attempted to enter the United States on January 5, 1986 by falsely claiming to be a U.S. citizen. The Field Office Director found the applicant to be 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 having attempted to procure entry to the United States by fraud or willful misrepresentation. The applicant seeks a waiver of inadmissibility in order to reside in the United States with his U.S. citizen spouse and children.

The Field Office Director concluded that the record failed to establish the existence of extreme hardship for a qualifying relative and denied the application accordingly. *See Decision of the Field Office Director*, dated February 3, 2009.

On appeal, the applicant's spouse asserts that she would suffer extreme hardship if she were separated from her husband for emotional and financial reasons. She further asserts that she would suffer extreme hardship if she relocated to Mexico with her husband.

In support of the waiver application and appeal, the applicant submitted a letter from his spouse, a letter from his stepdaughter, identity documents, medical letters concerning the applicant's spouse and child, insurance documentation, school records, and financial documentation. The entire record was reviewed and considered in rendering a decision on the appeal.

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

- (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:

- (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 immigrant 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...

Extreme hardship is “not a definable term of fixed and inflexible content or meaning,” but “necessarily depends upon the facts and circumstances peculiar to each case.” *Matter of Hwang*, 10 I&N Dec. 448, 451 (BIA 1964). In *Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez*, the Board provided a list of factors it deemed relevant in determining whether an alien has established extreme hardship to a qualifying relative. 22 I&N Dec. 560, 565 (BIA 1999). The factors include the presence of a lawful permanent resident or United States citizen spouse or parent in 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. *Id.* The Board added that not all of the foregoing factors need be analyzed in any given case and emphasized that the list of factors was not exclusive. *Id.* at 566.

The Board has also held that the common or typical results of removal and inadmissibility do not constitute extreme hardship, and has listed certain individual hardship factors considered common rather than extreme. These factors include: economic disadvantage, loss of current employment, inability to maintain one’s present standard of living, inability to pursue a chosen profession, separation from family members, severing community ties, cultural readjustment after living in the United States for many years, cultural adjustment of qualifying relatives who have never lived outside the United States, inferior economic and educational opportunities in the foreign country, or inferior medical facilities in the foreign country. *See generally Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez*, 22 I&N Dec. at 568; *Matter of Pilch*, 21 I&N Dec. 627, 632-33 (BIA 1996); *Matter of Ige*, 20 I&N Dec. 880, 883 (BIA 1994); *Matter of Ngai*, 19 I&N Dec. 245, 246-47 (Comm’r 1984); *Matter of Kim*, 15 I&N Dec. 88, 89-90 (BIA 1974); *Matter of Shaughnessy*, 12 I&N Dec. 810, 813 (BIA 1968).

However, though hardships may not be extreme when considered abstractly or individually, the Board has made it clear that “[r]elevant factors, though not extreme in themselves, must be considered in the aggregate in determining whether extreme hardship exists.” *Matter of O-J-O-*, 21 I&N Dec. 381, 383 (BIA 1996) (quoting *Matter of Ige*, 20 I&N Dec. at 882). The adjudicator “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.” *Id.*

The actual hardship associated with an abstract hardship factor such as family separation, economic disadvantage, cultural readjustment, et cetera, differs in nature and severity depending on the unique circumstances of each case, as does the cumulative hardship a qualifying relative experiences as a result of aggregated individual hardships. *See, e.g., Matter of Bing Chih Kao and Mei Tsui Lin*, 23 I&N Dec. 45, 51 (BIA 2001) (distinguishing *Matter of Pilch* regarding hardship faced by qualifying relatives on the basis of variations in the length of residence in the United States and the ability to speak the language of the country to which they would relocate). For example, though family separation has been found to be a common result of inadmissibility or removal, separation from family living in the United States can also be the most important single hardship factor in considering hardship in the aggregate. *See Salcido-Salcido*, 138 F.3d at 1293

(quoting *Contreras-Buenfil v. INS*, 712 F.2d 401, 403 (9th Cir. 1983)); *but see Matter of Ngai*, 19 I&N Dec. at 247 (separation of spouse and children from applicant not extreme hardship due to conflicting evidence in the record and because applicant and spouse had been voluntarily separated from one another for 28 years). Therefore, we consider the totality of the circumstances in determining whether denial of admission would result in extreme hardship to a qualifying relative.

The applicant's qualifying relative in this case is his U.S. citizen spouse. The record contains references to hardship that his children or stepchildren would experience if the waiver application were denied. It is noted that Congress did not include hardship to children or stepchildren as a factor to be considered in assessing extreme hardship. In the present case, the applicant's spouse is the only qualifying relative for the waiver under section 212(i) of the Act, and hardship to the applicant's children or stepchildren will not be separately considered, except as it may affect the applicant's spouse.

In the present case, the record reflects that the applicant is a fifty-four year-old native and citizen of Mexico. The applicant's spouse is a forty-seven year-old native of Mexico and citizen of the United States. The applicant and his spouse are currently residing in Rosemead, California.

The applicant's spouse asserts that she is experiencing emotional hardship because of the stress and anxiety resulting from possible separation from her husband. She further states that her stress was heightened due to the death of her mother on February 26, 2009. In support of these assertions, the applicant submitted a letter from a physician, [REDACTED], stating that the applicant's spouse was treated with therapy and medication for an anxiety disorder in 2006 and that she has been experiencing increased anxiety due to the loss of her mother and fear of losing her husband. The physician prescribed Lexapro to the applicant's spouse and recommended psychotherapy treatment. It is acknowledged that separation from a spouse nearly always creates a level of hardship for both parties and the record establishes that the applicant's spouse would suffer from emotional hardship due to separation from the applicant. However, there is no indication that the emotional hardship suffered by the applicant's spouse would be so serious that she would be unable to continue to perform in her daily activities. There is insufficient evidence in the record to find that the applicant's spouse would suffer a level of emotional hardship beyond the common results of inadmissibility or removal.

The applicant's spouse asserts that her husband is the sole financial support for the family and if she were employed, she would still be unable to pay their bills on her own. The applicant's spouse further states that her children are on her husband's health insurance and the record contains bills covering the mortgage and other monthly household payments. It is noted that the applicant's spouse has years of experience as a medical assistant. The record contains a letter from her former employer stating that as of March 15, 2005, she had been employed with Health Care Partners since July 1994. The record further reflects that the applicant's spouse stopped working in 2006 for recuperation from knee and bladder surgery. There is no indication that the applicant's spouse has any current medical conditions preventing her from working. At the time that the applicant's spouse submitted a Form I-864 on behalf of her husband, on June 17, 2005,

she was earning twenty-nine thousand dollars annually in her position. The record contains insufficient evidence to find that the applicant's spouse would suffer financial or other hardships beyond the common consequences of inadmissibility or removal due to separation from the applicant. Also, 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, it is not enough by itself to justify an extreme hardship determination. *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 applicant's spouse contends that she cannot relocate to Mexico to live with the applicant because her close family members live in the United States. Though the applicant's spouse is a native of Mexico, she states that she was not formally educated in Mexico past the sixth grade, so she does not have adequate Spanish writing and reading skills. The applicant's spouse also asserts that she would be unable to survive and support her children in Mexico. It is noted that the record does not contain any information concerning country conditions in Mexico. The record also does not contain any information concerning the applicant's relatives who live in Mexico, the extent of any relationship he has with them, and whether they would be able to assist in the transition to Mexico. The applicant's twenty-one year old stepdaughter submitted a letter stating that she intended to reside in her family's home in the United States. The record also contains evidence that the applicant's son has been diagnosed with asthma and allergies. It is initially noted that the applicant's children and stepchildren are not qualifying relatives in the context of this application so that any hardship they would experience will only be considered insofar as it affects the applicant's spouse. There has been no evidence submitted concerning the availability of treatment for the applicant's son's asthma and allergies in Mexico. In addition, there is no indication that the applicant's stepdaughter would be unable to secure employment and housing in the United States if her mother were to relocate to Mexico. It is further noted, the applicant's stepdaughter is the only letter of support contained in the record indicating the applicant's spouse's ties in the United States. Going on record without supporting documentary evidence generally is not sufficient for purposes of meeting the burden of proof in these proceedings. *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 record contains insufficient evidence to find that the applicant's spouse would suffer hardship beyond the common consequences of inadmissibility or removal if she relocated to Mexico.

Although the depth of concern and anxiety over the applicant's immigration status is neither doubted nor minimized, the fact remains that Congress provided for a waiver of inadmissibility only under limited circumstances. While the prospect of separation or involuntary relocation nearly always results in considerable hardship to individuals and families, in specifically limiting the availability of a waiver of inadmissibility to cases of "extreme hardship," Congress did not intend that a waiver be granted in every case where a qualifying relationship exists. U.S. 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).

In this case, the record does not contain sufficient evidence to show that the hardships faced by the qualifying relative, considered in the aggregate, rise beyond the common results of removal or inadmissibility to the level of extreme hardship. The AAO therefore finds that the applicant has failed to establish extreme hardship to his U.S. citizen spouse as required under section 212(i) and of the Act. As the applicant has not established extreme hardship to a qualifying family member, no purpose would be served in determining 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.