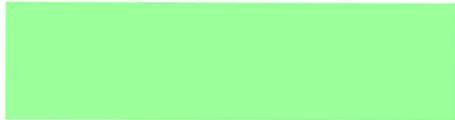




**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

(b)(6)



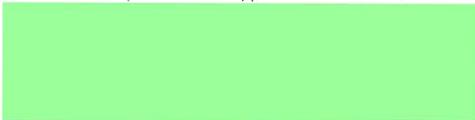
DATE: **JAN 09 2013** OFFICE: SAN FRANCISCO, CA

FILE:

IN RE: APPLICANT:

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 AAO inappropriately applied the law in reaching its decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen in accordance with the instructions on Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$630. The specific requirements for filing such a motion can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. **Do not file any motion directly with the AAO.** Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires any motion to be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

Ron Rosenberg
Acting Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The waiver application was denied by the Field Office Director, San Francisco, California, and a subsequent appeal was dismissed by the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO). The matter is now before the AAO on motion. The motion will be granted, but the underlying application remains denied.

The applicant is a native and citizen of Burma (Myanmar) who was found 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 procured a visa to the United States through fraud or misrepresentation. He is the beneficiary of an approved Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker. The applicant 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 with his lawful permanent resident spouse.

The Field Office Director concluded that the applicant failed to demonstrate the existence of extreme hardship to a qualifying relative and denied the application accordingly. *See Decision of Field Office Director* dated November 10, 2009. The AAO subsequently found the applicant was inadmissible pursuant to section 212(a)(6)(C)(i) of the Act, and that he did not have a qualifying relative for a waiver of inadmissibility. *See AAO Decision*, February 29, 2012. The appeal was consequently dismissed. *Id.*

On motion, counsel contends in a brief that the applicant is not inadmissible for fraud or misrepresentation, but even if he is, he has a qualifying relative due to his marriage to a U.S. lawful permanent resident.

The record includes, but is not limited to, statements from the applicant, other applications and petitions, and correspondence with USCIS. 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 [Secretary] may, in the discretion of the [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 [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.

In the present case, the record reflects that while still in Burma the applicant obtained an employment verification letter indicating he had experience as a cook. When applying for a nonimmigrant visa to the United States, the applicant stated his present occupation was a construction materials shop owner. The applicant was admitted into the United States pursuant to his nonimmigrant visa in July 1996. During an immigration interview conducted in 2005, the applicant admitted he procured the employment verification letter before admission as a nonimmigrant to the United States "for purpose of applying for a green card and preparing for permanent residence in the U.S." *Immigration interview*, April 5, 2005. The applicant additionally admitted during a subsequent immigration interview that he had never worked as a construction materials shop owner as he claimed on his nonimmigrant visa application.

On appeal counsel asserted that because the misrepresentation was made and designed by the Burmese travel agent who assisted him with the nonimmigrant visa application, and not the applicant himself, the applicant should not be held inadmissible for fraud or misrepresentation pursuant to section 212(a)(6)(C) of the Act even though he signed the application. The AAO found on appeal that the applicant was inadmissible under that section of the Act, regardless of who prepared the documents or the motivation behind the submission. *See AAO Decision*, February 29, 2012. Counsel's contention on motion, that the applicant was a victim of fraud and he is not inadmissible as explained in the brief on appeal, without any law or additional evidence in support, is insufficient to overturn the AAO's finding on appeal. Furthermore, the applicant fails to dispute on motion the AAO's finding that the applicant is also inadmissible under section 212(a)(6)(C) of the Act for having immigrant intent when applying for a nonimmigrant visa to the United States.

The applicant is therefore inadmissible under section 212(a)(6)(C)(i) of the Act for having procured a visa to the United States through fraud or misrepresentation. The applicant's qualifying relative for a waiver of this inadmissibility is his lawful permanent resident spouse.

Section 212(i) of the Act provides that a waiver of the bar to admission 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).

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 v. I.N.S.*, 138 F.3d 1292 (9th Cir. 1998) (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.

On motion, counsel submits evidence that the applicant and his spouse married on November 16, 2011, documentation of the spouse's lawful permanent resident status, and a copy of her application to become a U.S. citizen. Counsel asserts that because the applicant's spouse recently

filed her N-400, Application for Naturalization, she would suffer extreme hardship should the applicant be found inadmissible and forced to depart the United States. The record contains no explanation of how the applicant's inadmissibility and the spouse's filing of her Application for Naturalization would impose hardship upon the spouse, nor is there any supporting evidence on this matter. Without supporting evidence, the assertions of counsel will not satisfy the applicant's burden of proof. The unsupported assertions of counsel do not constitute evidence. See *Matter of Obaigbena*, 19 I&N Dec. 533, 534 n.2 (BIA 1988); *Matter of Laureano*, 19 I&N Dec. 1, 3 n.2 (BIA 1983); *Matter of Ramirez-Sanchez*, 17 I&N Dec. 503, 506 (BIA 1980).

Without any other assertions or supporting evidence, the AAO cannot conclude the applicant's spouse would experience extreme hardship given the applicant's inadmissibility. As such, 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 lawful permanent resident spouse as required under section 212(i) 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 a 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, although the motion is granted, the underlying application remains denied.

ORDER: The motion is granted, but the underlying application remains denied.