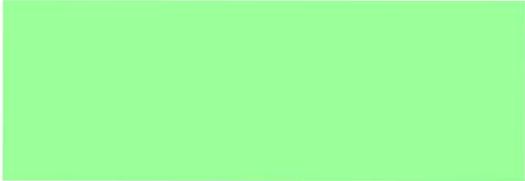




(b)(6)



DATE: **JUN 18 2013** Office: ANAHEIM File:

IN RE: Applicant:

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

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:

SELF-REPRESENTED

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 International Adjudications Support Branch on behalf of the Field Office Director, Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, and it 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 pursuant to 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 one year or more. She is seeking a waiver of inadmissibility in order to immigrate to the United States as the beneficiary of the approved Petition for Alien Relative (Form I-130) filed by her husband.

The field office director concluded the applicant had failed to establish that extreme hardship would be imposed on a qualifying relative and, accordingly, denied the Application for Waiver of Ground of Inadmissibility (Form I-601). *Decision of the Field Office Director*, July 30, 2012.

On appeal, the applicant claims through her husband that a qualifying relative would suffer extreme hardship due to the waiver denial. The record on appeal consists of updated hardship statements of the applicant's husband and social security benefit statements, as well as of evidence submitted with the waiver application, including an operative report, a hospital discharge summary, and untranslated documents.

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

(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....

The record indicates the applicant entered the United States without admission or parole in 2002 and remained here until November 2011, when she departed to apply for an immigrant visa. The field office director found her inadmissible for having accrued unlawful presence of one year or more.

A waiver of inadmissibility under section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) of the Act is dependent on a showing that the bar to admission imposes extreme hardship on a qualifying relative, which includes the U.S. citizen or lawfully resident spouse or parent of the applicant. Hardship to the applicant or her child can be considered only insofar as it results in hardship to a qualifying relative. The applicant's U.S. citizen husband is the only qualifying relative in this case. If extreme hardship to a qualifying relative is established, the applicant is statutorily eligible for a waiver, and USCIS then assesses whether a favorable exercise of discretion is warranted. See *Matter of Mendez-Morales*, 21 I&N Dec. 296, 301 (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 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. INS.*, 138 F.3d 1292, 1293 (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.

Regarding hardship from separation, there is no documentary evidence that the applicant's husband has incurred emotional hardship from his wife's absence beyond the normal and typical impact of separation from a loved one. Although the qualifying relative contends his wife's inability to immigrate is difficult for him, there is nothing on record to substantiate that her absence has caused any specific harm. The record fails to show that the applicant's husband is unable to visit his wife to ease the emotional pain of separation. Going on record without supporting documentary evidence is not sufficient for purposes of meeting the burden of proof in these proceedings. *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)).

Regarding financial hardship, the only substantiation offered of the qualifying relative's economic situation consists of two 2012 Social Security Benefits Statements (Form 1099) – his own and his child's. Without any information regarding expenses, either his own or his wife and child's living costs in Mexico, the AAO is unable to evaluate his claim that supporting two households represents a hardship. And, we note that one of the Form 1099s shows that nearly 40% of what he claims as his yearly income of \$15,865 are benefits being paid to the applicant's husband on behalf of their son.¹ As the record reflects that the applicant contributed no earnings to household maintenance, and where there is no evidence that her expenses in Mexico exceed her portion of the expenses when she lived her, there is nothing to indicate that her return to Mexico imposed an economic cost on her husband.

Documentation on record, when considered in its totality, does not show that the applicant's husband is suffering extreme hardship due to the applicant's inability to reside in the United States. The AAO recognizes that the qualifying relative will endure some hardship as a result of separation from the applicant. However, their situation is typical of individuals separated as a result of removal or inadmissibility, and the AAO therefore finds that the applicant has failed to establish hardship to a qualifying relative that rises to the level of "extreme" under the Act.

¹ The record lacks information regarding the basis for the son's benefits. However, removal from the qualifying relative of monies he is receiving for a son who is no longer residing with him does not represent an economic detriment to the father. We note that, as the qualifying relative's Form 1099 bears an address in the Mexican town of his birth, it is unclear where he currently lives.

Regarding relocation, the applicant's husband states that he has safety concerns for his wife and son, and we note that official U.S. government reporting reflects that personal safety is an issue in parts of the country. *See Travel Warning—Mexico*, November 20, 2012. However, the record contains no specific information that the applicant lives in a dangerous area or is subject to a particular threat and, as a U.S. citizen, his child is not required to relocate, with any decision that he live with his mother in Mexico being a matter of parental choice. And, as the qualifying relative is a retired U.S. citizen receiving social security payments, there is no indication in the record that his benefits would not have purchasing power in Mexico at least equal to what they would have here.

The qualifying relative offers insufficient evidence for us to determine whether moving to Mexico would impose hardship on him due to his claimed heart problems and high blood pressure, or evaluate the impact of a similar claim regarding his son's asthma. Medical documentation consists of two untranslated drug information sheets regarding his medication and a January 2009 hospital discharge summary for his son, including hand-written progress notes containing medical terminology and abbreviations that are not easily understood. This evidence is insufficient to establish that the applicant's husband and son suffer from the conditions claimed. The documents submitted were prepared for review by medical professionals or are otherwise illegible or indiscernible and do not contain a clear explanation of a current medical condition. Absent an explanation in plain language from the treating physician of the exact nature and severity of any condition and a description of any prescribed treatment, the AAO is not in the position to reach conclusions concerning the severity of a medical condition, the treatment needed, or the availability of suitable medical care in Mexico.

Without evidence how his wife or child's situation is affecting the applicant's husband, or how returning to the country where he lived until the age of 42 will adversely impact him, the applicant cannot show hardship that rises to the level of "extreme." The AAO thus concludes that, were the applicant unable to reside in the United States due to her inadmissibility, the record does not establish that a qualifying relative would suffer extreme hardship if he relocated to live with the applicant.

The documentation on record, when considered in aggregate, reflects that the applicant has not established her husband will suffer extreme hardship if she is unable to live in the United States. The AAO recognizes that the applicant's husband will endure hardship as a result of the applicant's inability to immigrate. However, his situation is typical of individuals affected by removal or inadmissibility, and the AAO thus finds that the applicant has failed to establish extreme hardship to her husband as required under the Act.

In proceedings for application for waiver of grounds of inadmissibility, 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.