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U.S. Citizenship
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FILE:

MSC 02 214 61158

Office: HOUSTON, TEXAS

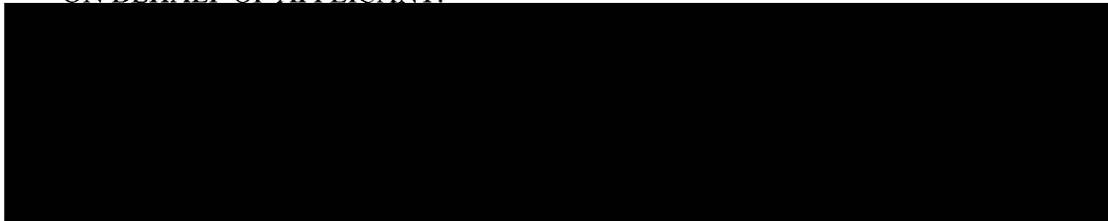
Date: **MAR 19 2008**

IN RE: Applicant:



APPLICATION: Application for Status as a Permanent Resident pursuant to Section 1104 of the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106-553, 114 Stat. 2762 (2000), *amended by* Life Act Amendments, Pub. L. 106-554, 114 Stat. 2763 (2000).

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:



INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. If your appeal was dismissed or rejected, all documents have been returned to the National Benefits [or Records] Center. You no longer have a case pending before this office, and you are not entitled to file a motion to reopen or reconsider your case. If your appeal was sustained or remanded for further action, you will be contacted.

Robert P. Wiemann, Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application for permanent resident status under the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act was denied by the District Director in Houston, Texas. It is now on appeal before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO). The appeal will be dismissed.

The director denied the application because the applicant failed to establish that he satisfied the “basic citizenship skills” required under section 1104(c)(2)(E) of the LIFE Act.

On appeal the applicant states that he has been trying to learn English and submits evidence that he has taken a citizenship preparation course at Houston Community College.

Under section 1104(c)(2)(E)(i) of the LIFE Act, regarding basic citizenship skills, an applicant for permanent resident status must demonstrate that he or she:

- (I) meets the requirements of section 312(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1423(a))(relating to minimal understanding of ordinary English and a knowledge and understanding of the history and government of the United States); or
- (II) is satisfactorily pursuing a course of study (recognized by the Attorney General) to achieve such an understanding of English and such a knowledge and understanding of the history and government of the United States.

Under section 1104(c)(2)(E)(ii) of the LIFE Act, the Attorney General may waive all or part of the above requirements for aliens who are at least 65 years of age or who are developmentally disabled. *See also* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(c).

An applicant may establish that he or she has met the requirements of section 312(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Act) by demonstrating an understanding of the English language, including an ability to read, write, and speak words in ordinary usage in the English language and by demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of the history and of the principles and form of government of the United States. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(1) and 8 C.F.R. §§ 312.1 and 312.2.

An applicant may also establish that he or she has met the requirements of section 312(a) of the Act by providing a high school diploma or general educational development diploma (GED) from a school in the United States. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(2).

Finally, an applicant may establish that he or she has met the requirements of section 312(a) of the Act by providing evidence that he or she has attended or is attending a state recognized, accredited learning institution in the United States, following a course of study which spans one academic year and that includes 40 hours of instruction in English and United States history and government. The

applicant may provide documentation of such on the letterhead stationery of said institution prior to or during the LIFE interview. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(3).

The applicant who fails to pass the English literacy and/or the United States history and government tests at the time of the initial LIFE interview shall be afforded a second opportunity after 6 months: to pass the tests; to submit evidence of a high school diploma or GED from a school in the United States; or to submit evidence that he or she has attended or is attending a state-recognized, accredited learning institution in the United States, following a course of study which spans an academic year and that includes 40 hours of instruction in English and United States history and government. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(b).

On May 2, 2002, the applicant filed his Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Resident or Adjust Status, under section 1104 of the LIFE Act.

On July 22, 2003, the applicant was interviewed in connection with his LIFE Act application. He failed to demonstrate a basic understanding of ordinary English during the examination portion of the interview.

At his second interview, which took place on October 8, 2004, the applicant again failed the basic citizenship skills examination for failure to demonstrate a basic understanding of ordinary English, as well as a basic knowledge of U.S. history and government.

On April 11, 2005, therefore, the director denied the application for failure of the applicant to satisfy the “basic citizenship skills” required for LIFE legalization.

On appeal the applicant states that he has been trying to learn English and has attended Houston Community College to improve his English language ability and knowledge of U.S. history. The applicant submits a photocopy of a “Certificate of Completion” from that institution, dated October 2, 2004, confirming that the applicant had successfully completed an 18-hour “Citizenship Preparation” course.

The 18 hours of citizenship preparation completed at Houston Community College fall short of the 40 hours required under 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(3) to meet the “basic citizenship skills” requirement of the LIFE Act.

Nor has the applicant satisfied the “basic citizenship skills” requirement under the other two alternatives established in the regulations. He has not provided a high school diploma or GED from a school in the United States, as required under 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(2), and he did not pass the basic citizenship skills examination, as required under 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(1), at either of his LIFE legalization interviews.

The applicant is not 65 years old or older and is not developmentally disabled. Thus, he does not qualify for either of the exceptions listed in section 1104(c)(2)(E)(ii) of the LIFE Act.

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that he has met the basic citizenship skills requirement as described at 1104(c)(2)(E) of the LIFE Act. Accordingly, he is not eligible to adjust to permanent resident status under section 1104 of the LIFE Act.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. This decision constitutes a final notice of ineligibility.