

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service:
Immigrant Investor Program
131 M Street, NE, MS 2235
Washington, DC 20529



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

TO:
Charlotte Harbor Regional Center
Allen Heise
1990 Main St. Ste. 750
Sarasota, FL 34236

DATE: October 2, 2017
Application: Form I-924
File Number: RCW1031910198
RCID: ID1031910198

NOTICE OF TERMINATION

This letter shall serve as notification that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS") has terminated the designation of Charlotte Harbor Regional Center, LLC (the "Regional Center") as a regional center under the Immigrant Investor Program (the "Program") pursuant to Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations ("8 C.F.R.") section 204.6(m)(6). The reasons for the termination are explained, below:

(SEE ATTACHED)

If the Regional Center disagrees with this decision, or if the Regional Center has additional evidence that shows this decision is incorrect, the Regional Center may file a motion or an appeal to this decision by filing a completed Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, along with the appropriate filing fee. A copy is enclosed. The Regional Center may also include a brief or other written statement and additional evidence in support of the motion or appeal. The Form I-290B must be filed within 33 days from the date of this notice. If a motion or appeal is not filed within 33 days, this decision is final.

The Regional Center must send the completed Form I-290B and supporting documentation with the appropriate filing fee to the address indicated below.

If using the U.S. Postal Service:

USCIS
P.O. Box 660168
Dallas, TX 75266

If using USPS Express Main/Courier:

USCIS
Attn: I-290B
2501 S. State Highway 121 Business
Suite 400
Lewisville, TX 75067

For an appeal, the Regional Center may request additional time to submit a brief within 30 calendar days of filing the appeal. Any brief, written statement, or evidence in support of an appeal that is not filed with Form I-290B must be directly sent within 30 days of filing the appeal to:

USCIS Administrative Appeals Office
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090

Charlotte Harbor Regional Center, LLC – **Designation Terminated**

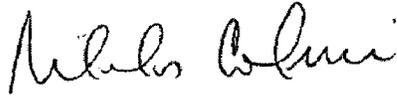
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For more information about the filing requirements for appeals and motions, please see 8 C.F.R. § 103.3 or 103.5, or visit the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicholas Colucci". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "N" and a long, sweeping underline.

Nicholas Colucci

Chief, Immigrant Investor Program

Enclosure: (1) Form I-290B with instructions

(2) Notice of Intent to Terminate issued on August 1, 2017

NOTICE OF TERMINATION
Termination of Regional Center Designation Under the Immigrant Investor Program
Charlotte Harbor Regional Center

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6) (*Continued participation requirements for regional centers*) provides:

- (i) Regional centers approved for participation in the program must:
 - (A) Continue to meet the requirements of section 610(a) of the Appropriations Act.
 - (B) Provide USCIS with updated information annually, and/or as otherwise requested by USCIS, to demonstrate that the regional center is continuing to promote economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, and increased domestic capital investment in the approved geographic area, using a form designated for this purpose; and
 - (C) Pay the fee provided by 8 CFR 103.7(b)(1)(i)(XX).
- (ii) USCIS will issue a notice of intent to terminate the designation of a regional center in the program if:
 - (A) A regional center fails to submit the information required in paragraph (m)(6)(i)(B) of this section, or pay the associated fee; or
 - (B) USCIS determines that the regional center no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, and increased domestic capital investment.
- (iii) A notice of intent to terminate the designation of a regional center will be sent to the regional center and set forth the reasons for termination.
- (iv) The regional center will be provided 30 days from receipt of the notice of intent to terminate to rebut the ground or grounds stated in the notice of intent to terminate.
- (v) USCIS will notify the regional center of the final decision. If USCIS determines that the regional center's participation in the program should be terminated, USCIS will state the reasons for termination. The regional center may appeal the final termination decision in accordance with 8 CFR 103.3.
- (vi) A regional center may elect to withdraw from the program and request a termination of the regional center designation. The regional center must notify USCIS of such

election in the form of a letter or as otherwise requested by USCIS. USCIS will notify the regional center of its decision regarding the withdrawal request in writing.

I. Procedural History

On October 12, 2010, USCIS designated and authorized the Regional Center's participation in the Program. On August 1, 2017, USCIS issued a Notice of Intent to Terminate ("NOIT") to the Regional Center which afforded the Regional Center 30 days from receipt of the NOIT to offer evidence in opposition to the grounds alleged in the NOIT. To date, USCIS has not received a response from the Regional Center to the NOIT and the Regional Center has offered no evidence in opposition to the grounds alleged in the NOIT. Accordingly, USCIS has determined that the Regional Center's participation in the Program should be terminated. Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6)(v) and through this Notice of Termination, USCIS hereby terminates the Regional Center's participation in the Program.

II. Reasons for Termination

USCIS has determined that the Regional Center failed to submit the required information, failed to pay the fee provided by 8 CFR 103.7(b)(1)(i)(XX) and no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, or increased domestic capital investment as required by 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6).

A. Failure to Submit Required Information to USCIS

As indicated in the NOIT, the Regional Center failed to provide information to USCIS. Under 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6)(i)(B), a regional center must:

Provide USCIS with updated information annually, and/or as otherwise requested by USCIS, to demonstrate that the regional center is continuing to promote economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, and increased domestic capital investment in the approved geographic area, using a form designated for this purpose.

1. Failure to Submit Form I-924A

The Form I-924A instructions state that each designated regional center must file a Form I-924A for each fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) within 90 days after the end of the fiscal year (on or before December 29 of the calendar year in which the fiscal year ended). The form instructions further state that failure to timely file a Form I-924A for each fiscal year in which the regional center has been designated for participation in the Program will result in the issuance of an intent to terminate the participation of the regional center in the Program, which may ultimately result in the termination of the approval and designation of the regional center.

As explained in the NOIT, the Regional Center sent a copy of a Form I-924A for fiscal year 2016 directly to the Immigrant Investor Program Office (“IPO”) in Washington, D.C., on December 6, 2016. IPO rejected that Form I-924A and returned it to the Regional Center along with instructions for how to properly file the I-924A to the proper address.

As of the date of this notice, USCIS records indicate that the Regional Center has not properly filed a Form I-924A for fiscal year 2016. Due to the Regional Center’s failure to file Form I-924A, as required by the regulations and the Form I-924A instructions, USCIS terminates the Regional Center’s participation in the Program.

A. Failure to Continue to Serve the Purpose of Promoting Economic Growth

Regional centers are designated for the promotion of economic growth and must continue to meet the requirements of section 610(a) of the Appropriations Act as amended, and promote economic growth in a manner that does not conflict with requirements for classification under section 203(b)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (“INA”), removal of conditions on lawful permanent residence under section 216A of the INA, and implementing regulations following their designation. According to section 610(a) of the Appropriations Act, economic growth includes increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, or increased domestic capital investment. *See also* 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6)(ii) (“USCIS will issue a notice of intent to terminate the designation of a regional center in the program if. . . USCIS determines that the regional center no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, and increased domestic capital investment.”).

The reasons why a regional center may no longer serve the purpose of promoting economic growth are varied and “extend beyond inactivity on the part of a regional center.” 75 FR 58962. For example, depending on the facts, a regional center that takes actions that undermine investors’ ability to comply with EB-5 statutory and regulatory requirements such that investors cannot obtain EB-5 classification through investment in the regional center may no longer serve the purpose of promoting economic growth. *See* Section 610(a)-(b) of the Appropriations Act (stating that one purpose of a regional center is to concentrate pooled investment in defined economic zones and accomplishing such pooled investment by setting aside visas for aliens classified under INA 203(b)(5)). Likewise, a regional center that fails to engage in proper monitoring and oversight of the capital investment activities and jobs created or maintained under the sponsorship of the regional center may no longer serve the purpose of promoting economic growth in compliance with the Program and its authorities.

When derogatory information arises (such as evidence of inaction, mismanagement, theft, or fraud by the regional center or related entities), USCIS weighs all relevant factors in the totality of the circumstances to determine whether the regional center is continuing to serve the purpose of promoting economic growth. Such factors may include the seriousness of the derogatory information, the degree of regional center involvement in the activities described in the derogatory information, any resulting damage or risk imposed on investors and the economy, as well as any mitigating, corrective, or restorative actions taken or forthcoming to redress the situation.

USCIS has considered all evidence in the record “for relevance, probative value, and credibility, both individually and within the context of the totality of the evidence,” in determining whether the Regional Center’s continued participation is justified under the regulations by a preponderance of the evidence. *See Matter of Chawathe*, 25 I&N Dec. 369, 376 (AAO 2010). For the reasons set forth below, USCIS has determined by a preponderance of the evidence that the Regional Center no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth in compliance with the Program.

1. Insufficient Regional Center Activity Due to Lack of Progress

As described in the NOIT, the Regional Center’s failure to adhere to its own benchmarks has resulted in considerable doubt being cast on the on the ability of its projects to result in job creation as represented.

As described in the NOIT, the Regional Center has admitted that its sole project, titled Fractional Marina Club Development (the “Project”), which was associated with the Regional Center’s only new commercial enterprise, Charlotte Harbor Marina, LP (the “NCE”), was stalled and had not begun construction. Evidence submitted by the Regional Center showed that the timeline for obtaining investments and the beginning of construction would change from year to year, and the most recent version of the construction timeline indicated that the project would be completed by December 2015.¹ As of the date of this notice, the Regional Center has not provided any evidence to show that there has been any progress on the development of the Project.

(b)(4)

USCIS records show that a total of [REDACTED] I-526 petitions have been filed in relation to the NCE sponsored by the Regional Center. All of the petitions were initially denied by USCIS, but [REDACTED] petitioners appealed their decisions and were subsequently approved in 2014. No other I-526 petitions have been filed pursuant to the Regional Center’s Project since [REDACTED]

(b)(4)

The Regional Center admitted that, although it had received approximately [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] EB-5 investors with approved I-526 petitions, none of those funds had been deployed for the purpose of job-

¹ As noted in a request for evidence issued to the Regional Center on September 7, 2016, the project business plan filed with the initial regional center application in 2010 anticipated that the NCE’s project would be completed in 2012. However, in the business plans submitted with I-526 petitions related to the NCE, the project was due to be completed by the end of 2014. The Regional Center then submitted an updated construction schedule along with its Form I-924A for fiscal year 2015. The updated construction schedule then stated that the project would be completed by December 2015.

creating activities. While not providing any detail, the Regional Center stated that it was unable to access those funds and provided statements showing that, as of October 2016, all of those funds were still held in an escrow account. As of the date of this notice, the Regional Center has not provided any additional evidence as to the status of those EB-5 investment funds.

Additionally, the Regional Center stated that it was unaware of which organizational documents had been submitted by investors in the NCE and the Regional Center had been unable to obtain copies of those documents. As pointed out in the NOIT, there is no evidence that the Regional Center has made any attempts to obtain the documents through information requests through appropriate, formal means such as under the Freedom of Information Act. While the Regional Center indicated that it could revive the Project within a few years' time, considering that it has not even been able to obtain or maintain records of its own business activities, that assertion is not credible. Since the Regional Center has not provided credible evidence to show that it will be able to commence construction on its sole project, it is unlikely that the Regional Center has the ability to promote economic growth.

As a result of the Regional Center's failure to adhere to its own benchmarks, considerable doubt has been cast on the ability of its projects to result in job creation as represented and USCIS has determined by a preponderance of the evidence that the Regional Center no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth.

III. Conclusion

For the reasons described above and set forth in the NOIT and pursuant to 8 C.F.R. 204.6(m)(6), USCIS has determined that the Regional Center has failed to submit the required information to USCIS, has failed to pay the fee provided by 8 CFR 103.7(b)(1)(i)(XX) and hereby terminates the Regional Center's participation in the Program.

If the Regional Center disagrees with this decision, or if the Regional Center has additional evidence that shows this decision is incorrect, the Regional Center may file a motion or an appeal to this decision by filing a completed Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, along with the appropriate filing fee. A copy is enclosed. The Regional Center may also include a brief or other written statement and additional evidence in support of the motion or appeal. The Form I-290B must be filed within 33 days from the date of this notice. If a motion or appeal is not filed within 33 days, this decision is final.

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USCIS
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Dallas, TX 75266

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USCIS
Attn: I-290B
2501 S. State Highway 121 Business
Suite 400

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Lewisville, TX 75067

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