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## News Releases

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DECEMBER 1, 2010 ORLANDO, FL

### Third conspirator sentenced in 55 million dollar visa fraud scheme

ORLANDO, Fla. - Eduardo Dozzi Barbugli, 31, was sentenced to 20 months in federal prison Wednesday for his involvement in a \$55 million visa fraud conspiracy, following an investigation led by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Office of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).



Barbugli was convicted of conspiracy, visa fraud, and alien smuggling in relation to an elaborate scheme which allowed illegal aliens to work at jobs that normally would have been filled by U.S. citizens. As part of his sentence, the court also imposed a money judgment in the amount of \$55 million, which represents the illegal proceeds generated during the course of the conspiracy.

He pled guilty on Sept. 9.

Barbugli is a citizen of Brazil who has been living and working in the United States illegally. He will be removed from the United States after he serves his sentence.

His parents, Valeria and Wilson Barbugli, were sentenced on Oct. 14 for their participation in the conspiracy.

According to court documents, the Barbuglis used a temporary labor staffing conglomerate that supplied workers to more than 160 hotels. Through their complex visa fraud and alien smuggling activities, the defendants allowed more than 1,000 illegal aliens to enter and remain in the United States using fraudulently obtained H-2B employment-based visas.

An H-2B visa is granted to certain qualified foreign workers seeking temporary employment in the United States. As part of the conspiracy, the Barbuglis submitted false documentation to the government and manipulated the H-2B visa process.

The Barbuglis submitted altered hotel contract agreements to conceal their activities and falsely reported that U.S. workers had been hired when they had not. The Barbuglis also falsely claimed that no payments were being collected from the alien workers, when in fact the workers had actually paid between \$350 to \$750 each to be placed on the fraudulent H-2B visa petitions.

The Barbuglis used shell companies in successive petitions to create the illusion that new bona fide companies had temporary labor needs. This was done to deceive authorities and hide the fact that all of the workers were employed by the same corporation, namely VR Services, without interruption.

This elaborate deceit enabled VR Services to establish a permanent foreign labor pool, which employed illegal alien workers across the United States.

This case was jointly investigated by the Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force, a multi-agency task force that coordinates investigations into fraudulent immigration documents. The task force is led by ICE HSI and also includes the U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of State and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

It was prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Stephanie E. Gorman.

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