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News Releases

JANUARY 25, 2011 ATLANTA, GA

Immigration attorney indicted for filing false visa applications, alien harboring

ATLANTA - An immigration attorney was indicted Tuesday by a federal grand jury on charges of visa fraud, alien harboring, and conspiracy, following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and the United States Department of Labor.

Parmesh N. Dixit, 40, of Alpharetta, Ga., made his initial appearance and was arraigned before Magistrate Judge Russell G. Vineyard. He was released on \$50,000 secured bond and ordered to surrender his United States and United Kingdom passports.

"Committing immigration fraud is a serious matter and it is particularly disturbing when it is committed by an immigration attorney," said Brock Nicholson, acting special agent in charge of ICE HSI in Atlanta. "This man knows the law and he will now have to answer to charges that he manipulated it for his own personal profit."

According to the charges and other information presented in court, from July 2005 through July 2008, Dixit conspired with others to obtain visas for his clients by submitting fraudulent applications to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Dixit filed applications for citizenship containing false information, altering the facts so that aliens who were not eligible for work visas would appear eligible.

"This immigration attorney allegedly used his knowledge of the United States' visa programs to fraudulently manipulate the system for dozens of clients," said U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia Sally Quillian Yates. "He is now charged with deliberately lying about his clients' qualifications to make them look qualified for a U.S. work visa, when he knew they were not. Lies on federal visa applications violate federal laws. Those who help others fill out visa applications with false information - lawyers or not - face prosecution."

Dixit told clients he could obtain "green cards" or resident alien status for them through lawful visa programs through which certain qualified and high-level managers in overseas companies can come to the United States to work.

Because his clients did not in fact qualify for these programs, Dixit submitted fraudulent information on his clients' applications in order to make it appear that they did qualify. The fraudulent information included the applicants' prior employment, biographical data, and the jobs purportedly available for the alien in the United States. Dixit charged his clients higher than normal fees as he claimed he could obtain visas for the illegal alien clients.

The indictment charges Dixit with 28 counts of visa fraud, 42 counts of alien harboring for the purpose of private financial gain, and one count of conspiracy to commit visa fraud. Each charge of visa fraud carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. Each charge of alien harboring carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. The conspiracy count carries a maximum sentence of five years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Susan Coppedge and William L. McKinnon, Jr. are prosecuting the case.

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.

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