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News Releases

FEBRUARY 17, 2011 NEWARK, NJ

New Jersey man sentenced on immigration fraud charges Helped dozens of illegal aliens file fraudulent documents

NEWARK, N.J. - Syed Zaidi, 54, was sentenced today to 26 months in prison for his role in an immigration fraud conspiracy. The investigation was conducted by agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

"Document and benefit fraud is an extremely lucrative crime that is often challenging to investigate, but HSI agents are determined to bring these criminals to justice," said Peter T. Edge, special agent in charge of ICE HSI in Newark.

"Fraudulent documents may be used to obtain immigration, financial benefits and entitlements that are intended for US citizens, and also threatens our national security."

According to court documents, from July 2002 through June 2009, Zaidi and his co-conspirators helped dozens of aliens file fraudulent applications with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The fraudulent applications typically asserted that the alien applicants qualified for employment authorization or lawful permanent resident status because they were religious workers or had specialized skills as computer consultants or in graphic design. Other applications fraudulently asserted that the aliens qualified for lawful permanent resident status under a federally-recognized Amnesty Program, claiming they had continuously resided in the United States illegally since before Jan. 1, 1982.

The applications contained letters from alleged employers, bank statements, and tax records which were fabricated by Zaidi and his co-conspirators to make the applications appear credible. Zaidi and his co-conspirators charged each alien applicant between \$5,000 and \$30,000 to complete and file their respective applications.

Zaidi had previously pleaded guilty to two counts of an indictment charging him with conspiracy to submit fraudulent documents to USCIS and inducing an illegal alien to remain in the United States.

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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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