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News Releases

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Former U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services supervisor sentenced to 5 years on bribery and fraud offenses

LOS ANGELES — A former supervisor with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and his son were sentenced Thursday on federal corruption charges to 60 months and 48 months in prison, respectively, following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations and the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General.

Fernando Jacobs, 72, of Upland, Calif., and his son, Patrick Jacobs, 44, of Ontario, Calif., were sentenced by U.S. District Judge George H. King. Judge King also ordered Fernando Jacobs to pay a \$30,000 fine. Fernando Jacobs was remanded into custody to begin serving his prison sentence immediately. Patrick Jacobs has been in custody since his arrest in December 2009.

Fernando Jacobs, who was a supervisory immigration services officer with USCIS, and Patrick Jacobs were convicted by a jury of conspiracy, bribery and honest services wire fraud. Additionally, Fernando Jacobs was also convicted of visa fraud.

The evidence presented during the two-week trial in U.S. District Court in April showed the elder Jacobs accepted bribes in exchange for helping aliens seeking status in the United States and that his son acted as a middleman brokering deals with those individuals.

"The significance of public corruption cases like this cannot be overestimated," said U.S. Attorney André Birotte, Jr. "The American public demands honest government service and the Department of Justice is committed to policing government and preserving the public trust."

The evidence showed the elder Jacobs and his son engaged in a scheme to defraud USCIS of Fernando Jacobs' honest services, using his authority and official position to enrich themselves by receiving payments in return for various actions. That included expediting the processing of immigration case files, obtaining and providing immigration information from Department of Homeland Security immigration databases, and obtaining and providing I-551 stamps that authorize aliens to travel to and from the United States. As part of the scheme, Fernando Jacobs fraudulently procured passport stamps for two Mexican nationals that allowed them to travel to and from the United States.

During Thursday's sentencing hearing, Judge King said that Fernando Jacobs "sold out his office for money" and that he did so "because he wanted money and he was greedy."

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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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