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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services

ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OFFICE
425 Eye Street N.W.
ULLB, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20536

[Redacted]

MAR 26 2003

File: [Redacted] Office: Nebraska Service Center

Date:

IN RE: Petitioner: [Redacted]
Beneficiary: [Redacted]

Petition: Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker as a Skilled Worker or Professional Pursuant to Section 203(b)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(3).

PUBLIC COPY

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

[Redacted]

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied or the analysis used in reaching the decision was inconsistent with the information provided or with precedent decisions, you may file a motion to reconsider. Such a motion must state the reasons for reconsideration and be supported by any pertinent precedent decisions. Any motion to reconsider must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider, as required under 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i).

If you have new or additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reopen. Such a motion must state the new facts to be proved at the reopened proceeding and be supported by affidavits or other documentary evidence. Any motion to reopen must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reopen, except that failure to file before this period expires may be excused in the discretion of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (Bureau) where it is demonstrated that the delay was reasonable and beyond the control of the applicant or petitioner. *Id.*

Any motion must be filed with the office that originally decided your case along with a fee of \$110 as required under 8 C.F.R. § 103.7.

Robert P. Wiemann
Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The preference visa petition was denied by the Director, Nebraska Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner is a restaurant. It seeks to employ the beneficiary permanently in the United States as a specialty cook. As required by statute, the petition is accompanied by an individual labor certification approved by the Department of Labor. The director determined that the petitioner had not established that it had the financial ability to pay the beneficiary the proffered wage as of the priority date of the visa petition.

On appeal, counsel submits a brief and additional evidence.

Section 203(b)(3)(A)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(3)(A)(i), provides for the granting of preference classification to qualified immigrants who are capable, at the time of petitioning for classification under this paragraph, of performing skilled labor (requiring at least two years training or experience), not of a temporary or seasonal nature, for which qualified workers are not available in the United States.

8 C.F.R. § 204.5(g)(2) states in pertinent part:

Ability of prospective employer to pay wage. Any petition filed by or for an employment-based immigrant which requires an offer of employment must be accompanied by evidence that the prospective United States employer has the ability to pay the proffered wage. The petitioner must demonstrate this ability at the time the priority date is established and continuing until the beneficiary obtains lawful permanent residence. Evidence of this ability shall be either in the form of copies of annual reports, federal tax returns, or audited financial statements.

Eligibility in this matter hinges on the petitioner's ability to pay the wage offered as of the petition's priority date, which is the date the request for labor certification was accepted for processing by any office within the employment system of the Department of Labor. *Matter of Wing's Tea House*, 16 I&N Dec. 158 (Act. Reg. Comm. 1977). Here, the petition's priority date is January 13, 1998. The beneficiary's salary as stated on the labor certification is \$9.37 per hour or \$19,489.60 per annum.

Counsel submitted copies of the first page only of the petitioner's 1998 through 2000 Form 1120S U.S. Income Tax Return for an S

Corporation. The tax return for 1998 reflected gross receipts of \$467,018; gross profit of \$258,925; compensation of officers of \$37,806; salaries and wages paid of \$71,744; and an ordinary income (loss) from trade or business activities of \$8,379. The tax return for 1999 reflected gross receipts of \$450,297; gross profit of \$250,951; compensation of officers of \$48,610; salaries and wages paid of \$59,283; and an ordinary income (loss) from trade or business activities of \$4,625.

The tax return for 2000 reflected gross receipts of \$454,128; gross profit of \$255,934; compensation of officers of \$30,660; salaries and wages paid of \$70,135; and an ordinary income (loss) from trade or business activities of \$5,719.

The director determined that the evidence did not establish that the petitioner had the ability to pay the proffered wage and denied the petition accordingly.

On appeal, counsel submits a letter from the petitioner which states:

If approved we plan on featuring [the beneficiary] as a cook from the "old Country." My clientele enjoys good home cooked meals from home. They we (sic) be more frequent customers and bring additional business to my restaurant if it is known that I have a cook from Slovakia. The training that [the beneficiary] received from [redacted] will increase our business. Even if [the beneficiary] brings the gross receipts up \$20,000.00 to \$30,000.00 this will cover his salary. We expect an increase that will exceed this projection.

Counsel's argument that the beneficiary's employment will result in more income for the business is not persuasive. Counsel does not explain the basis for such a conclusion. For example, the petitioner has not demonstrated that the beneficiary will replace less productive workers, transform the nature of the petitioner's operation, or increase the number of customers on the strength of his reputation. Absent evidence of these savings, this statement can only be taken as counsel's personal opinion. Consequently, the Service is unable to take the potential earnings to be generated by the beneficiary's employment into consideration.

The petitioner's Form 1120S for calendar year 1998 shows an ordinary income of \$8,379. The petitioner could not pay a proffered salary of \$19,489.60 out of this income. In addition, without Schedule L of the tax returns, the Bureau is unable to determine if the petitioner had sufficient net current assets to



pay the wage.

In addition, the tax returns for 1999 and 2000 continue to show an inability to pay the wage offered.

Accordingly, after a review of the federal tax returns, it is concluded that the petitioner has not established that it had sufficient available funds to pay the salary offered as of the priority date of the petition and continuing to present.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. The petitioner has not met that burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.

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