



U.S. Department of Justice

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**For Immediate Release:
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Event: Sentenced

Defendant: Mohamad Ibrahim Arzouni

**DEARBORN HEIGHTS MAN RECEIVES JAIL TIME
FOR MARRIAGE FRAUD**

Terrence Berg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan, announced that a Dearborn Heights resident was sentenced to 10 months imprisonment and three additional years of supervised release for conspiring to defraud the United States through a fraudulent marriage arranged to obtain immigration benefits.

Making the announcement along with U.S. Attorney Berg were John Tiano, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit, Michigan office of the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General, and Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit, Michigan office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Mohamad Ibrahim Arzouni, age 61, of Dearborn Heights, Michigan was sentenced yesterday by United States District Judge Julian Abele Cook, Jr.

Arzouni was convicted by plea in October of 2008 for conspiring with others, including Talal Chahine, the fugitive owner of the La Shish restaurant chain, to defraud the United States. Arzouni admitted to paying thousands of dollars in cash to a U.S. citizen so that she would pretend to be his wife. Over the course of several years, Arzouni applied for and obtained numerous immigration benefits based on his fraudulent marriage.

In sentencing Arzouni to jail time, Judge Cook observed that Mr. Arzouni's activities were serious. His is a crime that strikes at the core of a system designed to allow foreign nationals the opportunity to live in the United States and, if they so desire, to become full citizens of this country based upon true and authentic marriages to U.S. citizens. Mr. Arzouni knowingly and repeatedly exploited that system. Over the course of more than five years, he pursued and obtained immigration benefits based on false information presented, repeatedly, to the administrative bodies of the United States.

United States Attorney Berg stated, "Safeguarding the integrity of the system whereby individuals apply for and obtain citizenship in our country is a continuing priority for this office. Anyone who knowingly abuses that system can expect to be prosecuted to the full extent of the law."

Special Agent in Charge Tiano stated, "The Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General will continue to be committed to working with our law enforcement partners to identify and aggressively investigate allegations of immigration benefit fraud to protect the integrity of DHS programs and operations."

Mr. Berg commended the agents from the Department of Homeland Security- Office of Inspector General and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for conducting an exhaustive investigation which resulted in the conviction of Assistant District Director Bailey and several other government officials.