



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

09/21/09

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FORMER FEDERAL EMPLOYEE SENTENCED FOR ACCEPTING BRIBE TO BRING ALIENS INTO UNITED STATES

Atlanta, GA - HASMUKH PATEL, 53, of McDonough, Georgia, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Clarence Cooper on charges of accepting a \$100,000 bribe, bringing aliens into the United States illegally, and unauthorized access of a law enforcement computer.

Acting United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said of the case, "While employed with Citizenship and Immigration Services in a position to assist aliens seeking to come to the United States lawfully, Hasmukh Patel abused the public trust by accepting a bribe to bring aliens to this country illegally. His corruption has now landed him in prison."

In Washington D.C., Special Agent in Charge Wayne H. Salzgaber, Special Investigations Division, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Office of Inspector General, said, "Today's sentence demonstrates there is no place among the dedicated professionals of the Department of Homeland Security for anyone who engages in corrupt activities."

PATEL was sentenced to 3 years, 4 months in prison to be followed by 3 years of supervised release. PATEL was also ordered to perform 100 hours of community service. PATEL was convicted of these charges on April 13, 2009, after a two week trial.

According to Acting United States Attorney Yates, the charges and other information presented in court: PATEL petitioned for a woman and her husband to come to the United States from India, purportedly to care for PATEL's ailing wife. The visa application claimed the couple would live in the PATEL's home and provide said care, when, as the witnesses testified, they never lived in the home or provided care as required by their visa. Witnesses from the United States Consulate in Mumbai, India testified that PATEL used his position with Immigration to vouch for the veracity of the couple's application informing a consular official he was employed by the Department of Homeland Security, Citizenship and Immigration Service. Consular officials later alerted investigators that the defendant was attempting to bring in another couple on the same

type of temporary work visa. The evidence showed that PATEL also accessed his DHS computer to see if he or a visa recipient were under investigation.

PATEL was paid \$100,000 by the husband's brother who was already in the United States to bring his brother and sister-in-law to the United States illegally. Evidence at trial included an undercover recording of PATEL giving a tour of his home to the husband in order for the couple to be able to answer questions from investigators about the layout of the home and the work purportedly performed. The husband was in fact cooperating with the government and wearing a camera, which caught PATEL as he tried to cover up the crime. During the recorded conversation, PATEL acknowledged the payment of the bribe by the husband's brother. In another effort to cover-up his crime, PATEL wrote a series of checks to the visa recipient to make it appear that the woman worked in his home, when she did not. This supposed salary was, in fact, returned to PATEL.

PATEL was convicted on the conspiracy charge of encouraging aliens to illegally reside in the United States, and on substantive counts of taking a bribe in return for being influenced to commit a fraud on the United States, encouraging and inducing two aliens to enter and reside in the United States for his own private financial gain, making false statements to the U.S. Department of Labor and the Department of Homeland Security, and exceeding his authorized access on his government computer

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Office of the Inspector General and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, United States Department of State, Diplomatic Security Service, and Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General.

Assistant United States Attorneys Susan Coppedge and William L. McKinnon, Jr. prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, Acting United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.