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**FORMER IMMIGRATION OFFICIAL SENTENCED TO TWO AND A HALF
YEARS IN PRISON FOR PARTICIPATING IN MASSIVE
IMMIGRATION FRAUD SCHEME**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, SALVATORE DALESSANDRO, Special Agent-In-Charge of the New York Field Office of the Department of Homeland Security's U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), and MARK J. MERSHON, Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), announced that PHILIP BROWNE, 41, a former District Adjudication Officer with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services ("CIS"), was sentenced to thirty months in prison today for participating in an immigration fraud scheme that netted the conspirators more than one million dollars.

The sentence was imposed by United States District Judge LAWRENCE M. McKENNA in Manhattan federal court. PHILIP BROWNE and his sister, BEVERLY MOZER-BROWNE, pleaded guilty to fraud charges in September. According to documents filed in the case, statements made in court, and evidence offered at the trial of a co-defendant convicted last month:

BEVERLY MOZER-BROWNE owned and operated Help Preparers Professional Services ("HPPS"), a Queens business that purported to offer its customers assistance in a variety of financial and legal matters. In fact, the primary business at HPPS was fraudulently procuring permanent resident documents, or "green cards," from CIS, formerly known as the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service ("INS"), in exchange for fees ranging from \$8,000 to \$16,000 per customer.

To execute this scheme, MOZER-BROWNE and various co-conspirators arranged sham marriages between HPPS's customers and American citizens, who were paid for their participation. Once the purported marriages were documented, MOZER-BROWNE and her co-

conspirators at HPPS would file green card applications with CIS on behalf of HPPS's customers.

During the period of the conspiracy, PHILLIP BROWNE worked as a District Adjudication Officer for CIS at 26 Federal Plaza in New York, New York. BROWNE's responsibilities included interviewing green card applicants and approving green card applications. One of the purposes of the immigration interviews that BROWNE was responsible for conducting was to identify and deny applications that were predicated on sham marriages. BROWNE assisted MOZER-BROWNE in the scheme by corruptly approving applications submitted by HPPS's customers without requiring those applicants to appear for their scheduled interviews.

From approximately April 2001 through November 2005, BROWNE, MOZER-BROWNE, and their co-conspirators fraudulently procured hundreds of green cards for HPPS's customers, reaping fees totaling more than \$1 million.

In addition to the prison term, BROWNE was sentenced to three years of supervised release and ordered to forfeit \$500,000; MOZER-BROWNE is expected to be sentenced by Judge McKENNA on January 3, 2008.

In addition to BROWNE and MOZER-BROWNE, twenty-eight other defendants have been charged in this case. Of those twenty-eight defendants, twenty-six have pleaded guilty. One defendant, PETER ABSOLAM, was found guilty by a jury in August 2007. Charges against one defendant, WENDY HARRISON, remain pending. As to that defendant, the charges in the Indictment are merely allegations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Mr. GARCIA praised U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Office of the Inspector General, Department of Homeland Security, for their work in this investigation.

Mr. GARCIA stated, "Philip Browne sold his government office for his own personal gain. In doing so, he betrayed the trust of the public that employed him, the thousands of honest CIS employees who do their jobs conscientiously, and the immigrants who follow the rules in applying for legal permanent residence."

This case is being prosecuted by the Public Corruption Unit of the United States Attorney's Office. Assistant United States Attorneys MICHAEL A. LEVY and CHRISTINE Y. WONG are in charge of the prosecution.