



U.S. Department of Justice

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For Immediate Release

August 29, 2011

**ATTORNEY AND CLIENT CONVICTED OF IMMIGRATION FRAUD;
ATTORNEY ALSO CONVICTED OF FILING FALSE FEDERAL
INCOME TAX RETURNS**

PHILADELPHIA – On Friday evening, August 26, 2011, a federal jury found attorney Michael Choi, 55, of Huntingdon Valley, PA, and his client, Jong Soon Park, 48, of Blue Bell, PA, guilty of conspiring to violate the federal immigration laws, announced United States Attorney Zane David Memeger. Choi was also convicted of five counts of making false statements to the government, and two counts of filing false tax returns for the years 2005 and 2006 that failed to report substantial income from Choi’s law firm. Sentencing for both defendants is scheduled for November 22, 2011.

Choi is the principal of a law firm, Choi and Associates, P.C., located in Elkins Park, PA. At trial, three business owners, co-defendants Sung Mahn Gang, Hee Chan Bang and Keun S. Hwang testified that they had joined Choi in conspiring to defraud the government and make false statements to the United States. The business owner defendants and a number of Choi’s former immigration clients testified that they arranged for Choi’s alien clients to fraudulently obtain Alien Registration Receipt Cards, commonly known as “green cards,” so that the aliens could remain in the United States when they were not entitled to remain here. The business owners and Choi’s former wife and office manager, Sandra Oh, testified that Choi provided cash and legal services to business owners, including his co-defendants, to induce them to sign petitions falsely stating that their business intended to employ Choi’s alien clients.

The trial evidence also included tape recordings of meetings and conversations between Choi and a fourth business owner, who, unbeknownst to Choi, was working undercover at the direction of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The evidence showed that the defendants presented false petitions to the United States Department of Labor, and the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), which then issued employment documents for the aliens. The defendants, assisted by others, also caused fraudulent payroll checks to be submitted to USCIS that falsely indicated that the aliens were employed by the businesses owned by Gang, Bang and Hwang. Finally, the jury found Choi guilty of filing false income tax returns for the years 2005 and 2006 that failed to report substantial additional income from Choi’s law firm.

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The case was tried before the Honorable Petrese B. Tucker and a jury. Defendant Michael Choi faces a maximum possible sentence of 36 years in prison and a fine of up to \$2 million; defendant Jong Soon Park faces a maximum possible sentence of 5 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations, and Social Security Administration's Office of Inspector General. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Mary E. Crawley and Andrew J. Schell.

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