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NEWS RELEASE

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July 23, 2002

EOIR Announces Latest Disciplinary Actions Under Rules of Professional Conduct

Four Receive Final Orders; One Receives Immediate Suspension

The Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) has taken disciplinary action against five attorneys after charging them with violations of the rules of professional conduct for immigration practitioners provided in Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (8 CFR Parts 3 and 292). The attorneys' rule violations arose out of sanctions imposed by other jurisdictions.

Disciplinary proceedings began in each case with a Petition for Immediate Suspension and Notice of Intent to Discipline filed with the Board of Immigration Appeals (the Board) by EOIR's Office of the General Counsel. The Board then ordered each attorney's immediate suspension from practice before the Immigration Courts, the Board, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (the Service) and required the attorney to respond to the alleged violations.

Final Orders of Discipline

The Board issued Final Orders of Discipline against the following attorneys after they failed to respond as required to the Notice of Intent to Discipline:

- **Wendy B. Golenbock**, disbarred from the practice of law in Massachusetts, was suspended by the Board on April 17, 2002. The Final Order of May 21, 2002, suspends her from practice before the immigration tribunals for eight years.

- **Joseph Lopez-Wilson**, suspended from the practice of law for two years by the Nebraska Supreme Court, was suspended by the Board on April 17, 2002. The Final Order of May 29, 2002, suspends him from practice before the immigration tribunals for two years.

- **Robert Edwin Porges** - who pled guilty to (1) conspiracy to engage in racketeering activity; (2) engaging in a pattern of racketeering activity; and (3) conspiracy to commit tax fraud - was suspended by the Board on May 6, 2002. The Final Order of June 6, 2002, expels him from practice before the immigration tribunals.

An Immigration Judge issued a Final Order of Discipline against the following attorney:

- **H. David Schmerin**, who was placed on an interim suspension by the State Bar of California, was suspended by the Board on October 29, 2001. The Final Order of May 8, 2002, suspends him indefinitely from practicing before the immigration tribunals.

Immediate Suspensions

The Board ordered the immediate suspension of the following attorney for the reason stated:

- **Charles Allen Grutman**, disbarred from the practice of law, by order of the New York Supreme Court, Appellate Division, First Judicial Department, was suspended by the Board on June 6, 2002, pending final disposition of his case.

Summary

In each of the disciplinary matters cited above, the suspended attorney was directed "to promptly notify, in writing, any clients with cases currently pending before the Board, the Immigration Courts, or the Service" that he or she may no longer represent clients before these tribunals.

The rules of professional conduct include provisions specifying grounds for disciplinary action, requirements for receiving and investigating complaints, and procedures for conducting hearings. The rules also authorize the Board to immediately suspend a practitioner who has been subject to

disbarment, suspension, or resignation with an admission of misconduct as imposed by a State or Federal court, pending a summary proceeding and final sanction.

EOIR announces these disciplinary actions to inform the public about practitioners who are not authorized to represent any matter before an immigration tribunal. EOIR also posts a list of suspended and expelled practitioners on its Web site at www.usdoj.gov/eoir.

Additional information about the Attorney Discipline Program can be found at www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcond.htm and www.usdoj.gov/eoir/press/00/profcondfaks.htm on the EOIR Web site.

EOIR, a component of the Department of Justice, is responsible for providing due process to individuals who are charged with immigration law violations. EOIR has more than 220 Immigration Judges located in 51 Immigration Courts nationwide to conduct proceedings and decide individual cases. The agency also includes the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) to hear appeals of Immigration Judge decisions and the Office of the Chief Administrative Hearing Officer to handle employment-related immigration matters.

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