



Department of Justice

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Alexandria Couple Convicted of Harboring Undocumented Workers

COVINGTON, Ky. – An Alexandria, Ky., couple was convicted on Thursday, by a federal jury sitting in Covington of harboring undocumented workers.

After four hours of deliberation, following a three-day trial, a federal jury convicted Yun Zheng, a.k.a. Wendy, 50, and Yan Qui Wu, a.k.a. Jason, 48, of four counts of concealing, harboring, or shielding a person, whom the defendants knew to be present in the United States illegally, for commercial advantage and private financial gain.

According to testimony at trial, from 2014 to 2017, Zheng and Wu owned and operated the Tokyo Dragon Buffet restaurant, located in Alexandria, as husband and wife. In that capacity, the defendants employed at least four undocumented workers, who were present in the United States illegally. The evidence established that the defendants knew, or recklessly disregarded facts indicating, that these workers were illegally present in the United States. The evidence also established that they housed these workers in their own home and provided virtually all the workers' transportation, to avoid detection.

One of those workers was badly burned by hot oil, while working at the Tokyo Dragon, but the owners initially refused to take him to the hospital because, in one of the defendant's own words, he was present illegally and would be deported if the owners transported him to the hospital. When the worker eventually received treatment, several days later, the nurses who treated him were so disturbed, by what the worker described and the defendants' conduct, that one of them called a law enforcement hotline. This began the investigation and resulted in the indictment.

Zheng and Wu were indicted in September 2021.

Carlton S. Shier, IV, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky; Jerry Templet, Special Agent in Charge, Department of Homeland Security - Homeland Security Investigations; and Lucas T. Cooper, Chief of the Alexandria Police Department; jointly announced the guilty verdicts.

The investigation was conducted by the Department of Homeland Security and the Alexandria Police Department. The United States was represented in the case by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Kyle Winslow and Zach Dembo.

Zheng and Wu are scheduled for sentencing on May 4, 2022. For each of the four counts, they face up to ten years in prison, up to \$250,000 fine, and restitution. However, any sentence following the conviction will be imposed by the Court, after its consideration of the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and the federal sentencing statutes.

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