IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	:	**CRIMINAL NO. 25-324**
v.	:	**DATE FILED: _______________**
FATIMA DEMARIA	:	**VIOLATIONS:** **18 U.S.C. § 1546(a) (asylum fraud – 8 counts)** **18 U.S.C. § 1341 (mail fraud – 8 counts)** **26 U.S.C. § 7201 (tax evasion – 4 counts)** **18 U.S.C. § 2 (aiding and abetting)** **Notice of forfeiture**

SUPERSEDING INDICTMENT

COUNTS ONE THROUGH EIGHT
(Asylum Fraud)

THE GRAND JURY CHARGES THAT:

BACKGROUND

1. Pursuant to federal immigration law, to obtain asylum in the United States, an alien, that is, an individual who is not a citizen or national of the United States, is required to show that he or she has either suffered past persecution or has a "well-founded fear" of future persecution if he or she were to return to their home country, on the basis of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group.

2. Aliens who are present in the United States and wish to file for asylum must submit an application called a Form I-589 with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS"), an agency within the United States Department of Homeland Security ("DHS"). In general, Form I-589 asylum applications must be filed by the alien applicant within one year of the date of the alien's arrival in the United States, unless they qualify for an

exception to that deadline. The Form I-589 requires a detailed account of the basis of the alien's claim to asylum. Both the applicant, and any individual other than a close relative who assists the applicant in preparing the Form I-589, such as an attorney or representative, are required to verify the accuracy of the information submitted in the application by signing the document under penalty of perjury.

3. After a Form I-589 asylum application is submitted to USCIS, an alien applicant for asylum may also apply for an Employment Authorization Document ("EAD") or "work permit," so that they can obtain lawful employment during the period of time that their asylum application is pending, a process that can take a number of years. Aliens must wait at least 150 days after filing an asylum application to apply for a work permit. Applications for work permits are made through the Form I-765, which in turn requires that the alien applicant set forth their eligibility category for the application. In the case of aliens with pending I-589 asylum applications, the relevant eligibility category is "(c)(8)." Both the alien applicant, and any individual other than a close relative who assists the applicant in preparing the Form I-765, such as an attorney or representative, are required to verify the accuracy of the information submitted in the application by signing the document under penalty of perjury.

4. Once USCIS processes a Form I-589 asylum application, the next stage in the process is for an asylum officer with USCIS to conduct an in-person interview of the applicant, a process that may take a number of years. After the interview, the asylum officer determines whether the alien applicant qualifies for asylum, and that determination is reviewed by a supervisory officer in USCIS. If the application is granted, the alien becomes an asylee and is eligible to apply for lawful permanent resident status after one year. If the application is

denied, and the alien is otherwise removable, the matter is generally referred to the Executive Office for Immigration Review ("EOIR"), an agency within the United States Department of Justice, for the alien to appear in immigration court for a removal hearing.

THE SCHEME

At all times material to this indictment:

5. USCIS was an agency of DHS that administers the country's immigration and naturalization applications and benefits. USCIS was charged with processing immigrant visa petitions, naturalization applications, asylum applications, applications for adjustment of status (green cards), applications for work authorization, and other immigration-related applications.

6. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA owned and operated Immigration Matters Legal Services, located at 125 Bell Tower Lane Suite 1, Oxford, in Chester County, Pennsylvania, which provided immigration-related services to aliens. Immigration Matters Legal Services employed a secretary, Person No. 1, who reported directly to defendant DEMARIA and who took direction from defendant DEMARIA, including by mailing immigration-related applications and submissions at defendant DEMARIA's direction.

7. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA falsely represented herself to alien clients and prospective alien clients as an immigration attorney who could help undocumented aliens obtain employment authorization or "work permits." Defendant DEMARIA was not a licensed attorney. Nor was defendant DEMARIA accredited or authorized by the Executive Office for Immigration Review ("EOIR") to represent individuals in immigration proceedings.

8. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA prepared, and caused to be prepared, fraudulent Form I-589 asylum applications in her alien clients' names, without their knowledge

or consent. Defendant DEMARIA knowingly made, and aided and abetted the making of, false and material misstatements in the I-589 asylum applications. For example, defendant DEMARIA caused to be stated on each asylum application that the alien applicant was "seeking asylum or withholding of removal" based on "political opinion" and "Torture Convention." Defendant DEMARIA's alien clients, however, were not seeking asylum based on either of these categories, and they did not inform defendant DEMARIA, Person No. 1, or any representative at Immigration Matters Legal Services of facts that could make them eligible for asylum under either of these categories.

9. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA attached, and caused to be attached, "addendums" to her alien clients' I-589 asylum applications containing multiple false assertions about the applicants' backgrounds, alleged mistreatment and threats suffered, and purported fears of persecution in their home countries. Neither defendant DEMARIA nor anyone working at her direction, including Person No. 1, collected personalized information from her alien clients about whether they had suffered past persecution or had a well-founded fear of persecution in their home countries based on a protected class under the refugee and asylum laws. Defendant DEMARIA instead caused recycled and boilerplate false material facts and claims of fears of persecution to be included in application after application, without verifying with her alien clients whether these statements were true. Defendant DEMARIA caused false, boilerplate, and standardized factual claims to be made in these addendums, including in describing alleged harm, threats, and persecution purportedly experienced by her alien clients.

10. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA and those acting at her direction, including Person No. 1, altogether failed to advise defendant DEMARIA's alien clients that the

mechanism through which she would help them obtain work permits from USCIS was by filing frivolous Form I-589 asylum applications. Defendant DEMARIA and those acting at her direction, including Person No. 1, did not share the asylum applications in her alien clients' names with her clients before she filed them. Defendant DEMARIA and those acting at her direction, including Person No. 1, also did not advise her alien clients that if the asylum applications filed on their behalf (which she did not inform her clients were even being filed) were rejected or referred by USCIS, it would result in their being placed in removal proceedings, at which point the filing of the baseless asylum application could jeopardize their eligibility for future immigration benefits.

11. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA placed, and caused to be placed, her alien clients' signatures on the Form I-589 asylum applications, certifying under penalty of perjury that the applications and supporting evidence were true and correct, without her clients' knowledge or consent.

12. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA falsely declared, and caused to be declared, on each Form I-589 asylum application that Immigration Matters Legal Services prepared the application at the request of the alien client, that the responses on the application were based on information of which Immigration Matters Legal Services had knowledge or was provided by the applicant, and that the application was read to the applicant in his or her native language.

13. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA submitted, and caused to be submitted, the fraudulent Form I-589 asylum applications in her clients' names to USCIS, without her clients' knowledge or consent. Defendant DEMARIA did so by mailing, and causing the mailing

of, the applications to USCIS through the U.S. postal service.

14. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA charged her alien clients approximately $6,000-9,000 per individual alien, and $12,000-$15,000 per couple, for her purported legal services in conjunction with applying for the work permit (which, unbeknownst to her alien clients, included the filing of false Form I-589 asylum applications). Defendant DEMARIA quoted her alien clients an initial charge of approximately $6,000 per individual and $12,000 per couple, and then sometimes levied additional charges when the clients attempted to retrieve their work permits.

15. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA often requested that her alien clients pay her in cash or electronic peer-to-peer transactions for her purported legal services in connection with applying for work permits (which, unbeknownst to her alien clients, included the filing of false Form I-589 asylum applications), and many of these funds were deposited into defendant DEMARIA's personal bank accounts, hundreds of thousands of dollars of which were then withdrawn at local casinos.

16. On or about the dates set forth below, in Philadelphia, in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, defendant

FATIMA DEMARIA

knowingly made, and aided and abetted the making of, under oath, and subscribed as true, and aided and abetted the subscribing as true, under penalty of perjury pursuant to Title 28, United States Code, Section 1746, false statements with respect to material facts in the following applications, affidavits, and other documents required by the immigration laws and regulations prescribed thereunder, and knowingly presented, and aided and abetted the presenting of, such applications, affidavits, and other documents which contained such false statements and which failed to contain any reasonable basis in law and fact, each false immigration document constituting a separate count:

Count	Date Subscribed	Alien	Immigration Document
1	12/23/2021	ESS	I-589 Asylum Application
2	8/1/2023	EZB	I-589 Asylum Application
3	3/26/2024	ANLL	I-589 Asylum Application
4	4/16/2024	JAAS	I-589 Asylum Application
5	5/23/2024	MADC	I-589 Asylum Application
6	6/13/2024	JLZ	I-589 Asylum Application
7	6/27/2024	CMA	I-589 Asylum Application
8	7/1/2024	ASC	I-589 Asylum Application

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1546(a) and 2.

COUNTS NINE THROUGH SIXTEEN
(Mail Fraud)

THE GRAND JURY FURTHER CHARGES THAT:

1. Paragraphs 1 through 6 of Counts One through Eight are incorporated here.

THE SCHEME

2. From in or about December 2021 to in or about July 30, 2025, in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, defendant

FATIMA DEMARIA

devised and intended to devise a scheme to defraud alien clients of her business, Immigration Matters Legal Services, and to obtain money and property by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises.

MANNER AND MEANS

It was part of the scheme that:

3. The allegations in paragraphs 7 through 15 of Counts One through Eight are incorporated here.

4. Defendant FATIMA DEMARIA caused the mailing of immigration packages containing fraudulent and frivolous Form I-589s from U.S. post offices in Lincoln University, Pennsylvania; Oxford, Pennsylvania; and Nottingham, Pennsylvania to USCIS's offices in Essex Junction, Vermont; Dallas, Texas; Laguna Niguel, California; and Chicago, Illinois.

5. On or about each of the dates set forth below, in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, defendant

FATIMA DEMARIA,

for the purpose of executing the scheme described above, and aiding and abetting its execution, knowingly caused to be transmitted by United States mail the following documents, each mailing constituting a separate count:

Count	Date Mailed	Mailed From	Mailed To	Alien(s)	Immigration Document
9	1/10/2022	U.S. Post Office, Lincoln University, PA	Vermont Service Center, 38 River Road, Essex Junction, VT 05479	ESS	I-589 Asylum Application [Note: Envelope says "Attention: Asylum]
10	8/22/2023	U.S. Post Office, Oxford, PA	USCIS, PO Box 10881, Laguna Niguel, CA 92607	EZB CLJ	I-589 Asylum Application [Note: Envelope says "Attn: I-589"]
11	4/12/2024	U.S. Post Office, Nottingham, PA	USCIS PO Box 653080, Dallas, TX 75265	ANLL	I-589 Asylum Application [Note: Envelope says "Attn: I-589"]
12	4/26/2024	U.S. Post Office, Oxford, PA	USCIS, PO Box 653080, Dallas, TX 75265	JAAS	I-589 Asylum Application [Note: Envelope says "Attn: I-589"]
13	6/6/2024	U.S. Post Office, Oxford, PA	USCIS, PO Box 653080, Dallas, TX 75265	MADC CPMV	I-589 Asylum Application [Note: Envelope says "Attn: I589"]

Count	Date Mailed	Mailed From	Mailed To	Alien(s)	Immigration Document
14	7/31/2024	U.S. Post Office, Oxford, PA	USCIS, PO Box 653080, Dallas, TX 75265	JLZ LGM	I-589 Asylum Application [Note: Envelope says "Attn: I-589"]
15	8/15/2024	U.S. Post Office, Oxford, PA	USCIS, PO Box 653080, Dallas, TX 75265	CMA ECMG	I-589 Asylum Application [Note: Envelope says "Attn: I-589"]
16	8/27/2024	U.S. Post Office, Oxford, PA	USCIS, PO Box 653080, Dallas, TX 75265	ASC MLT	I-589 Asylum Application [Note: Envelope says "Attn: I-589"]

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1341 and 2.

COUNT SEVENTEEN
(Tax Evasion)

THE GRAND JURY FURTHER CHARGES THAT:

At all times material to this indictment:

1. Paragraph 6 of Counts One through Eight is incorporated here.

2. The Internal Revenue Service ("IRS") was an agency within the United States Department of Treasury responsible for administering the tax laws and collecting taxes owed to the United States.

3. Business partnerships in the United States were required to file an annual information return with the IRS using Form 1065, U.S. Return of Partnership Income. The Form 1065 was used by partnerships to report their annual income, deductions, gains, losses, and other financial activity to the IRS.

4. A Schedule K-1 was an IRS tax form filed with the Form 1065 and issued to each partner in a partnership, which was used to report each partner's share of income, losses, deductions, and credits from the partnership.

5. United States taxpayers who earn income during a calendar year in excess of a threshold amount were obligated to file a Form 1040, U.S. Individual Income Tax Return, with the IRS for that calendar year. The Form 1040 was used by individual taxpayers to report their annual income, claim deductions and credits, and calculate their tax liability or refund.

6. A Schedule E, Supplemental Income and Loss, was an IRS tax form filed with the Form 1040 and used by taxpayers to report income or loss from, among other sources, partnerships.

7. A Schedule C, Profit or Loss from Business (Sole Proprietorship), was an IRS tax form filed with the Form 1040 and used by taxpayers to report income and expenses from a business operated as a sole proprietorship.

8. During the entirety of tax year 2021 and part of tax year 2022, Immigration Matters Legal Services operated as a partnership between defendant FATIMA DEMARIA and Person No. 2, with defendant DEMARIA owning fifty-one percent of the business, and Person No. 2 owning the remaining forty-nine percent. As a partnership, Immigration Matters Legal Services was a "flow-through entity," which meant that the profits or losses from its business were not taxed at the corporate level, but had to be reported on the federal individual income tax returns of each of its partners. The items reported on the Forms 1065, Schedule K-1s, including profits and losses, flowed to each partner's Forms 1040, determining individual tax liability.

9. In or about June 2022, the partnership structure for Immigration Matters Legal Services ended, and the entity became a sole proprietorship. Therefore, during the entirety of tax years 2023 and 2024, Immigration Matters Legal Services operated as a sole proprietorship, with defendant FATIMA DEMARIA owning one hundred percent of the business.

10. From on or about January 1, 2021, through on or about April 11, 2022, in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, defendant

FATIMA DEMARIA

willfully attempted to evade and defeat a large part of her income tax due and owing by her and her husband to the United States of America for calendar year 2021 through various means, by committing the following affirmative acts, among others:

a. preparing and causing to be prepared, signing and causing to be signed, and filing and causing to be filed with the IRS, a false and fraudulent Form 1065 and Schedule K-1 for Immigration Matters Legal Services for 2021, which failed to report substantial business income from Immigration Matters Legal Services;

b. preparing and causing to be prepared, signing and causing to be signed, and filing and causing to be filed with the IRS, a false and fraudulent Form 1040 and Schedule E for defendant DEMARIA and her husband for 2021, which failed to report substantial business income of the business;

c. making and causing to be made deposits of significant amounts of business funds, consisting of Immigration Matters Legal Services' gross receipts, into defendant DEMARIA'S personal bank accounts; and

d. concealing amounts of defendant DEMARIA's true and correct income, and the frequency with which she deposited money, by structuring cash deposits into her personal and business bank accounts.

In violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7201.

COUNT EIGHTEEN
(Tax Evasion)

THE GRAND JURY FURTHER CHARGES THAT:

1. Paragraph 6 of Counts One through Eight, and paragraphs 1 through 8 of Count Seventeen, are incorporated here.

2. From on or about January 1, 2022, through on or about April 17, 2023, in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, defendant

FATIMA DEMARIA

willfully attempted to evade and defeat a large part of her income tax due and owing by her and her husband to the United States of America for calendar year 2022 through various means, by committing the following affirmative acts, among others:

a. preparing and causing to be prepared, signing and causing to be signed, and filing and causing to be filed with the IRS, a false and fraudulent Form 1065 and Schedule K-1 for Immigration Matters Legal Services for 2022, which failed to report substantial business income from Immigration Matters Legal Services;

b. preparing and causing to be prepared, signing and causing to be signed, and filing and causing to be filed with the IRS, a false and fraudulent Form 1040 and Schedule E for defendant DEMARIA and her husband for 2022, which failed to report substantial business income of this business;

c. making and causing to be made deposits of significant amounts of business funds, consisting of Immigration Matters Legal Services' gross receipts, into defendant DEMARIA's personal bank accounts; and

d. concealing amounts of defendant DEMARIA's true and correct income, and the frequency with which she deposited money, by structuring cash deposits into her personal and business bank accounts.

In violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7201.

COUNT NINETEEN
(Tax Evasion)

THE GRAND JURY FURTHER CHARGES THAT:

1. Paragraph 6 of Counts One through Eight, and paragraphs 1 through 8 of Count Seventeen, are incorporated here.

2. From on or about January 1, 2023, through on or about April 15, 2024, in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, defendant

FATIMA DEMARIA

willfully attempted to evade and defeat a large part of her income tax due and owing by her and her husband to the United States of America for calendar year 2023 through various means, by committing the following affirmative acts, among others:

a. preparing and causing to be prepared, signing and causing to be signed, and filing and causing to be filed with the IRS, a false and fraudulent Form 1040 and Schedule C for defendant DEMARIA and her husband for 2023, which failed to report substantial business income from Immigration Matters Legal Services;

b. making and causing to be made deposits of significant amounts of business funds, consisting of Immigration Matters Legal Services' gross receipts, into defendant DEMARIA's personal bank accounts; and

c. concealing amounts of defendant DEMARIA's true and correct income, and the frequency with which she deposited money, by structuring cash deposits into her personal and business bank accounts.

In violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7201.

COUNT TWENTY
(Tax Evasion)

THE GRAND JURY FURTHER CHARGES THAT:

1. Paragraph 6 of Counts One through Eight, and paragraphs 1 through 8 of Count Seventeen, are incorporated here.

2. From on or about January 1, 2024, through on or about April 15, 2025, in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, defendant

FATIMA DEMARIA

willfully attempted to evade and defeat a large part of her income tax due and owing by her and her husband to the United States of America for calendar year 2024 through various means, by committing the following affirmative acts, among others:

a. preparing and causing to be prepared, signing and causing to be signed, and filing and causing to be filed with the IRS, a false and fraudulent Form 1040 and Schedule C for defendant DEMARIA and her husband for 2024, which failed to report substantial business income from Immigration Matters Legal Services;

b. making and causing to be made deposits of significant amounts of business funds, consisting of Immigration Matters Legal Services' gross receipts, into defendant DEMARIA's personal bank accounts; and

c. concealing amounts of her true and correct income, and the frequency with which defendant DEMARIA deposited money, by structuring cash deposits into her personal and business bank accounts.

In violation of Title 26, United States Code, Section 7201.

NOTICE OF FORFEITURE

THE GRAND JURY FURTHER CHARGES THAT:

1. As a result of the violations of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1341 and 1546 as set forth in this indictment, defendant

FATIMA DEMARIA

shall forfeit to the United States of America any property, real of personal, which constitutes or is derived from proceeds traceable to the commission of such violations, including, but not limited to, the sum of $1,000,000.

2. If any of the property subject to forfeiture, as a result of any act or omission of the defendant:

(a) cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;

(b) has been transferred or sold to, or deposited with, a third party;

(c) has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the Court;

(d) has been substantially diminished in value; or

(e) has been commingled with other property which cannot be divided without difficulty;

it is the intent of the United States, pursuant to Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c), incorporating Title 21, United States Code, Section 853(p), to seek forfeiture of any other property of the defendant up to the value of the property subject to forfeiture.

All pursuant to Title 28, United States Code, Section 2461(c) and Title 18, United States Code, Section 981(a)(1)(C).

A TRUE BILL:

[redacted]

Christine E. Sykes for

DAVID METCALF
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

No. 25-324

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Criminal Division

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

vs.

FATIMA DEMARIA

SUPERSEDING INDICTMENT

18 U.S.C. § 1546(a) (asylum fraud – 8 counts)
18 U.S.C. § 1341 (mail fraud – 8 counts)
26 U.S.C. § 7201 (tax evasion – 4 counts)
18 U.S.C. § 2 (aiding and abetting)

[redacted]

Bail, $____________

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

SUPERSEDING INDICTMENT

DESIGNATION FORM to be used by counsel to indicate the category of the case for the purpose of assignment to appropriate calendar.

Address of Plaintiff: 615 Chestnut Street, Suite 1250, Philadelphia, PA 19106-4476

Post Office: Philadelphia County: Philadelphia

City and State of Defendant: Lincoln University, PA

County: Chester Register number: N/A

Place of accident, incident, or transaction: Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Post Office: 19352 County: Philadelphia

RELATED CASE, IF ANY:

Criminal cases are deemed related when the answer to the following question is “yes”.

Does this case involve a defendant or defendants alleged to have participated in the same action or transaction, or in the same series of acts or transactions, constituting an offense or offenses?

YES/NO: NO

Case Number: N/A Judge: N/A

CRIMINAL: (Criminal Category - FOR USE BY U.S. ATTORNEY ONLY)

1. ○ Antitrust
2. ○ Income Tax and other Tax Prosecutions
3. ○ Commercial Mail Fraud
4. ○ Controlled Substances
5. ○ Violations of 18 U.S.C. Chapters 95 and 96 (Sections 1951-55 and 1961-68) and Mail Fraud other than commercial
6. ● General Criminal

(U.S. ATTORNEY WILL PLEASE DESIGNATE PARTICULAR CRIME AND STATUTE CHARGED TO BE VIOLATED AND STATE ANY PREVIOUS CRIMINAL NUMBER FOR SPEEDY TRIAL ACT TRACKING PURPOSES)

18 U.S.C. § 1546(a) (8 counts), 18 U.S.C. § 1341 (8 counts), 26 U.S.C. § 720118 (4 counts), U.S.C. § 2

DATE: January 22, 2026

/s/ Sara A. Solow
Sara A. Solow
Eileen C. Geiger
Assistant United States Attorneys

File No. 2025R00112
U.S. v. Fatima DeMaria