



Department of Justice

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MAN SENTENCED FOR ILLEGALLY OBTAINING DOZENS OF ALIEN WORK VISAS AND FOR MORTGAGE FRAUD

ATLANTA, GA -- SUREN AGADZHANOV, 42, of Atlanta, was sentenced today to 3 years, 10 months in federal prison to be followed by 5 years of supervised release for his role in fraudulently applying for work visas for over 70 aliens and for using the proceeds from his visa fraud scheme to engage in mortgage fraud. Several of AGADZHANOV's mortgage fraud conspirators were also sentenced today to lesser terms in prison.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said of the case, "Border security and immigration control are of paramount importance in this era of increased threats from abroad. AGADZHANOV circumvented federal laws designed to allow those who can legally stay in this country to work. He knowingly submitted false paperwork on behalf of dozens of foreign nationals, and used his ill-gotten gains to defraud banks and other lending institutions in a mortgage swindle."

According to Nahmias and the information presented in court: In 2002, AGADZHANOV began fraudulently obtaining work visas for individuals from eastern Europe -- primarily the Baltic republics of Latvia and Lithuania -- who had legally entered the United States and desired to extend their stay beyond the term of their legitimate tourist or educational visas. AGADZHANOV charged his "clients" thousands of dollars to complete and submit false paperwork claiming that the individuals would be working for one of a stable of fictitious companies AGADZHANOV had established out of his home. AGADZHANOV fabricated information about the jobs -- responsibilities, salary, location, etc. -- as well as the companies. He would, at times, even include fake tax forms as evidence of the size and existence of the sham businesses. AGADZHANOV also submitted bogus educational credentials for many of the visa-seekers. Since neither the companies nor the jobs existed, his "clients," if granted work visas, would be illegally in the United States.

As the various federal agencies responsible for coordinating and executing the alien work visa program began to uncover AGADZHANOV's visa fraud scheme, more and more of his sham applications were rejected. Eventually, AGADZHANOV got out of the visa fraud business altogether and started investing the proceeds from that fraud in local Atlanta residential real estate. Typically, AGADZHANOV would find a property in foreclosure, buy it, and then "flip" the house to one of his visa "clients" at an inflated price. That buyer would never move in and the house would quickly fall back into foreclosure. The loan applications for both AGADZHANOV's purchases and the purchases by AGADZHANOV's phony buyers all had false information concerning the borrowers' employment and income -- often with the same fake companies that AGADZHANOV created for his visa fraud scheme.

This case was investigated by the State Department, Diplomatic Security Service (DSS), U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Department of Labor, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the United States Postal Inspection Service.

Assistant United States Attorney Robert McBurney prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias, United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.