

**ICE**Report Crimes: [Email](#) or Call [1-866-DHS-2-ICE](#)

ICE Newsroom

News Releases

News Releases

Professional Responsibility
05/13/2016

Former customs official sentenced to over 3 years in prison in bribery scheme to obtain benefits for immigrants

LOS ANGELES – A former official with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), who went on to operate an immigration consulting service, has been sentenced to 37 months in federal prison for participating in a scheme to pay bribes to other government employees to obtain “green cards” and citizenship for immigrants.

George Wu, 63, of Pico Rivera, who worked as a CBP officer until early 2012, and then operated Great Eastern Immigration Services, was sentenced late Thursday by U.S. District Judge Michael W. Fitzgerald. The case is the result of a probe by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) and the FBI.

Wu was found guilty in August 2015 of paying bribes in an effort to obtain citizenship and legal permanent resident status for several immigrants. A federal jury convicted Wu of conspiracy and five counts of bribery of a public official.

Wu, another immigration consultant named Michael Bui, and others solicited money from immigrants in exchange for help in obtaining benefits from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) that included lawful permanent residence and citizenship. Some of the money paid by the immigrants was used to pay bribes to public officials in exchange for granting immigration benefits.

“This defendant attempted to corrupt our nation’s immigration system by offering bribes in exchange for benefits,” said United States Attorney Eileen M. Decker. “It is critical to our national security that our nation’s immigration system functions properly and free from corruption such as this defendant’s.”

During the trial, prosecutors presented evidence that Wu received and paid bribe money on behalf of immigrants. The overall conspiracy involved at least seven immigrants, one of whom was allowed to pass an English proficiency exam even though she could not speak English.

In the first case, an attorney who also works as an immigration consultant paid Wu \$15,000, and Wu subsequently paid Bui \$10,000, a portion of which was intended for bribery payments, to secure assistance with a citizenship application. In the second case, Wu paid the attorney a total of \$15,000, again a portion of which was intended for bribes, for assistance in securing legal permanent resident status – commonly called a green card – for an immigrant. And in the third case, Wu paid a total of \$3,000 to an official with USCIS – an official who was acting in an undercover capacity as part of the investigation – for help in obtaining a green card for an immigrant.

Bui pleaded guilty in May 2015 to conspiracy and bribery, and he was sentenced Thursday afternoon by Judge Fitzgerald to serve one year and one day in prison.

The investigation by HSI OPR and the FBI into corruption involving government officials and immigration consultants has resulted in charges against 11 defendants. Seven of those defendants – including Wu and Bui – have now been convicted, including:

- Attorney Kwang Man “John” Lee, who pleaded guilty in March to three counts of bribery and admitted, among other things, paying tens of thousands of bribes to a senior immigrations services officer with USCIS and arranging sham marriages to secure green cards for clients;
- James Dominguez, a former HSI special agent who pleaded guilty to making false statements to ICE investigators when he lied about accessing immigration files and providing information to an

AILA Doc. No. 16051761. (Posted 5/17/16)

immigration lawyer; and

- Paul Lovingood, a former official with USCIS, who pleaded guilty to accepting an illegal gratuity from an immigration lawyer after adjudicating a petition for lawful permanent residence filed on behalf of one of the attorney's clients.

Share

-
-
-
-