



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

USCIS Efforts Lead to Guilty Plea in Case of Unauthorized Practice of Immigration Law

COLUMBIA, S.C.—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services helped initiate an investigation that led to charges and guilty pleas from Veronica Perdomo, 43, for fraudulently practicing immigration law and impersonating an immigration officer.

The plea included two counts of Wire Fraud, each of which carries a sentence of up to 20 years in prison; four counts of Impersonating an Officer or Employee of the United States, each such count carrying a sentence of up to 3 years in prison, and twelve counts of Fraudulently Affixing the Seal of an Agency of the United States to a Document, each such count carrying a sentence of up to 5 years in prison. Sentencing will occur after the preparation of a presentence report by the United States Probation Office.

A USCIS Fraud Detection and National Security (FDNS) immigration officer in Charlotte received the original tip that led to FDNS coordinating with DHS Homeland Security Investigation to identify fraudulent filings with USCIS by Perdomo.

At the guilty plea hearing on Thursday, Assistant United States Attorney David C. Stephens advised Judge Cain of the following facts: Perdomo devised a scheme whereby she, at various times, pretended to be either an employee, officer, or attorney working with or for the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (DHS/USCIS). Perdomo would seek out aliens who were either illegally in the United States or were here legally but having problems with their immigration status.

For a fee, Perdomo would “assist” these people in dealing with their immigration problems. In truth and fact she did absolutely nothing to assist them with their problems. In order to facilitate the scheme and artifice, Perdomo would prepare documents that she claimed were being sent to DHS/USCIS, which actually were simply being piled up in a storage shed behind her home. Perdomo would then create bogus documents bearing the seal of DHS/USCIS which she claimed were being sent from DHS/USCIS and provide same to her victims to purportedly show that their situations were being addressed. US Attorney Lydon advised that further details of the case could be found in the Indictment, a copy of which is attached.

Lydon further advised that a co-defendant in the case, Latoya Sanders, age 30, of Greenville, South Carolina, had earlier entered a plea of guilty as outlined in a press release which is also attached hereto. At the time of that plea no facts concerning the case were released due to Perdomo’s case being pending. Lydon stated that Sanders played a lesser role in the offense than did Perdomo and was basically used to collect money from the victims and assist Perdomo in her charade of being a part of the DHS/USCIS.

Lydon commended the efforts of the real agents from DHS/USCIS who she said worked many hours conducting a superb investigation. Additionally, Lydon had high praise for the officers from the Greenville City Police Department who originated the case and were outstanding partners as the investigation moved in to the federal arena.

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