

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
*Immigrant Investor Program*  
131 M Street, NE, MS 2235  
Washington, DC 20529



**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**

**TO:**

John D. Whelchel  
Florida East Coast EB-5 Regional Center, LLC  
980 N. Federal Highway, Suite #442  
Boca Raton, FL 33432

**DATE:** April 10, 2018

**Application:** Form I-924

**File Number:** RCW1228650784

**RCID:** ID1228650784

**NOTICE OF TERMINATION**

This letter shall serve as notification that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS") has terminated the designation of Florida East Coast EB-5 Regional Center, LLC (the "Regional Center"), as a regional center under the Immigrant Investor Program (the "Program") pursuant to Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations ("8 C.F.R.") section 204.6(m)(6). The reasons for the termination are explained, below:

**(SEE ATTACHED)**

If the Regional Center disagrees with this decision, or if the Regional Center has additional evidence that shows this decision is incorrect, the Regional Center may file a motion or an appeal to this decision by filing a completed Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, along with the appropriate filing fee. A copy is enclosed. The Regional Center may also include a brief or other written statement and additional evidence in support of the motion or appeal. The Form I-290B must be filed within 33 days from the date of this notice. If a motion or appeal is not filed within 33 days, this decision is final.

The Regional Center must send the completed Form I-290B and supporting documentation with the appropriate filing fee to the address indicated below.

If using the U.S. Postal Service:

USCIS  
P.O. Box 660168  
Dallas, TX 75266

If using USPS Express Main/Courier:

USCIS  
Attn: I-290B  
2501 S. State Highway 121 Business  
Suite 400  
Lewisville, TX 75067

For an appeal, the Regional Center may request additional time to submit a brief within 30 calendar days of filing the appeal. Any brief, written statement, or evidence in support of an appeal that is not filed with Form I-290B must be directly sent within 30 days of filing the appeal to:

USCIS Administrative Appeals Office  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, MS 2090

Florida East Coast EB-5 Regional Center, LLC – **Designation Terminated**

ID1228650784

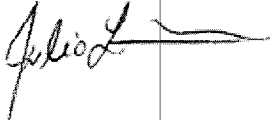
RCW1228650784

Page 2

Washington, DC 20529-2090

For more information about the filing requirements for appeals and motions, please see 8 C.F.R. § 103.3 or 103.5, or visit the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Julia L. Harrison", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Julia L. Harrison

Acting Chief, Immigrant Investor Program

Enclosure: (1) Form I-290B with instructions

(2) Notice of Intent to Terminate issued on 04/10/2018

cc: Luciana Zamith Fischer  
Hunter Taubman Fischer & Li, LLC  
777 Brickell Ave, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Miami, FL 33131

**NOTICE OF TERMINATION**

**Termination of Regional Center Designation Under the Immigrant Investor Program  
Florida East Coast EB-5 Regional Center, LLC**

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6) (*Continued participation requirements for regional centers*) provides:

(i) Regional centers approved for participation in the program must:

(A) Continue to meet the requirements of section 610(a) of the Appropriations Act.

(B) Provide USCIS with updated information annually, and/or as otherwise requested by USCIS, to demonstrate that the regional center is continuing to promote economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, and increased domestic capital investment in the approved geographic area, using a form designated for this purpose; and

(C) Pay the fee provided by 8 CFR 103.7(b)(1)(i)(XX).

(ii) USCIS will issue a notice of intent to terminate the designation of a regional center in the program if:

(A) A regional center fails to submit the information required in paragraph (m)(6)(i)(B) of this section, or pay the associated fee; or

(B) USCIS determines that the regional center no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, and increased domestic capital investment.

(iii) A notice of intent to terminate the designation of a regional center will be sent to the regional center and set forth the reasons for termination.

(iv) The regional center will be provided 30 days from receipt of the notice of intent to terminate to rebut the ground or grounds stated in the notice of intent to terminate.

(v) USCIS will notify the regional center of the final decision. If USCIS determines that the regional center's participation in the program should be terminated, USCIS will state the reasons for termination. The regional center may appeal the final termination decision in accordance with 8 CFR 103.3.

(vi) A regional center may elect to withdraw from the program and request a termination of the regional center designation. The regional center must notify USCIS of such

election in the form of a letter or as otherwise requested by USCIS. USCIS will notify the regional center of its decision regarding the withdrawal request in writing.

### **I. Procedural History**

On May 8, 2014, USCIS designated and authorized the Regional Center's participation in the Program. On February 14, 2018, USCIS issued a Notice of Intent to Terminate ("NOIT") to the Regional Center which afforded the Regional Center 30 days from receipt of the NOIT to offer evidence in opposition to the grounds alleged in the NOIT. To date, USCIS has not received a response from the Regional Center to the NOIT and the Regional Center has offered no evidence in opposition to the grounds alleged in the NOIT. Accordingly, USCIS has determined that the Regional Center's participation in the Program should be terminated. Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6)(v) and through this Notice of Termination, USCIS hereby terminates the Regional Center's participation in the Program.

### **II. Reasons for Termination**

USCIS has determined that the Regional Center failed to submit the required information, failed to pay the fee provided by 8 CFR 103.7(b)(1)(i)(XX) and no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, or increased domestic capital investment as required by 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6).

#### **A. Failure to Submit Required Information to USCIS**

As indicated in the NOIT, the Regional Center failed to provide information to USCIS on its annual Form I-924A filing for fiscal year 2017 (October 1 through September 30).

Under 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6)(i)(B), a regional center must:

Provide USCIS with updated information annually, and/or as otherwise requested by USCIS, to demonstrate that the regional center is continuing to promote economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, and increased domestic capital investment in the approved geographic area, using a form designated for this purpose.

#### ***1. Failure to Submit Form I-924A***

The Form I-924A instructions state that each designated regional center must file a Form I-924A for each fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) within 90 days after the end of the fiscal year (on or before December 29 of the calendar year in which the fiscal year ended). The form instructions further state that failure to timely file a Form I-924A for each fiscal year in which the regional center has been designated for participation in the Program will result in the issuance of an intent to terminate the participation of the regional center in the Program, which may ultimately result in the termination of the approval and designation of the regional center.

As of the date of this notice, USCIS records indicate that the Regional Center has not provided a response to the NOIT and has not filed a Form I-924A for fiscal year 2017. Due to the Regional Center's failure to file Form I-924A, as required by the regulations and the Form I-924A instructions, USCIS terminates the Regional Center's participation in the Program.

#### **B. Failure to Continue to Serve the Purpose of Promoting Economic Growth**

Regional centers are designated for the promotion of economic growth and must continue to meet the requirements of section 610(a) of the Appropriations Act as amended, and promote economic growth in a manner that does not conflict with requirements for classification under section 203(b)(5) of the Immigration and Nationality Act ("INA"), removal of conditions on lawful permanent residence under section 216A of the INA, and implementing regulations following their designation. According to section 610(a) of the Appropriations Act, economic growth includes increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, or increased domestic capital investment. *See also* 8 C.F.R. § 204.6(m)(6)(ii) ("USCIS will issue a notice of intent to terminate the designation of a regional center in the program if. . . USCIS determines that the regional center no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth, including increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, and increased domestic capital investment.").

The reasons why a regional center may no longer serve the purpose of promoting economic growth are varied and "extend beyond inactivity on the part of a regional center." 75 FR 58962. For example, depending on the facts, a regional center that takes actions that undermine investors' ability to comply with EB-5 statutory and regulatory requirements such that investors cannot obtain EB-5 classification through investment in the regional center may no longer serve the purpose of promoting economic growth. *See* Section 610(a)-(b) of the Appropriations Act (stating that one purpose of a regional center is to concentrate pooled investment in defined economic zones and accomplishing such pooled investment by setting aside visas for aliens classified under INA 203(b)(5)). Likewise, a regional center that fails to engage in proper monitoring and oversight of the capital investment activities and jobs created or maintained under the sponsorship of the regional center may no longer serve the purpose of promoting economic growth in compliance with the Program and its authorities.

When derogatory information arises (such as evidence of inaction, mismanagement, theft, or fraud by the regional center or related entities), USCIS weighs all relevant factors in the totality of the circumstances to determine whether the regional center is continuing to serve the purpose of promoting economic growth. Such factors may include the seriousness of the derogatory information, the degree of regional center involvement in the activities described in the derogatory information, any resulting damage or risk imposed on investors and the economy, as well as any mitigating, corrective, or restorative actions taken or forthcoming to redress the situation.

USCIS has considered all evidence in the record "for relevance, probative value, and credibility, both individually and within the context of the totality of the evidence," in determining whether the Regional Center's continued participation is justified under the regulations by a preponderance of the evidence. *See*

*Matter of Chawathe*, 25 I&N Dec. 369, 376 (AAO 2010). For the reasons set forth below, USCIS has determined by a preponderance of the evidence that the Regional Center no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth in compliance with the Program.

***1. Lack of Regional Center Activity***

As noted in the NOIT, the Regional Center's Form I-924A filings for fiscal years 2014, 2015, and 2016 do not report any EB-5 capital investment or job creation. In addition, although USCIS designated the Regional Center on May 8, 2014, the Form I-924A filings do not report any pending or approved Forms I-526 filed by petitioners who have made or are actively in the process of making investments associated with the Regional Center.

As of the date of this notice, USCIS records indicate that the Regional Center has not provided a response to the NOIT and the Regional Center's filings do not otherwise indicate that it has conducted activity that serves the purposes of the Program, including the "purpose of concentrating pooled investment" as required by section 610(a) of the Appropriations Act<sup>1</sup>.

In the absence of evidence of increased export sales, improved regional productivity, job creation, or increased domestic capital investment, USCIS concludes that the Regional Center no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth.

**III. Conclusion**

For the reasons described above and set forth in the NOIT and pursuant to 8 C.F.R. 204.6(m)(6), USCIS has determined that the Regional Center has failed to submit the required information to USCIS, and no longer serves the purpose of promoting economic growth and hereby terminates the Regional Center's participation in the Program.

If the Regional Center disagrees with this decision, or if the Regional Center has additional evidence that shows this decision is incorrect, the Regional Center may file a motion or an appeal to this decision by filing a completed Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, along with the appropriate filing fee. A copy is enclosed. The Regional Center may also include a brief or other written statement and additional evidence in support of the motion or appeal. The Form I-290B must be filed within 33 days from the date of this notice. If a motion or appeal is not filed within 33 days, this decision is final.

The Regional Center must send the completed Form I-290B and supporting documentation with the appropriate filing fee to the address indicated below.

If using the U.S. Postal Service:

If using USPS Express Main/Courier:

---

<sup>1</sup> USCIS Policy Manual, Volume 6, Part 6, Chapter 3.

Florida East Coast EB-5 Regional Center, LLC – **Designation Terminated**

ID1228650784

RCW1228650784

Page 7

USCIS  
P.O. Box 660168  
Dallas, TX 75266

USCIS  
Attn: I-290B  
2501 S. State Highway 121 Business  
Suite 400  
Lewisville, TX 75067

For an appeal, the Regional Center may request additional time to submit a brief within 30 calendar days of filing the appeal. Any brief, written statement, or evidence in support of an appeal that is not filed with Form I-290B must be directly sent within 30 days of filing the appeal to:

USCIS Administrative Appeals Office  
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
20 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, MS 2090  
Washington, DC 20529-2090

For more information about the filing requirements for appeals and motions, please see 8 C.F.R. § 103.3 or 103.5, or visit the USCIS website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).