

# MARKETPLACE

## JOURNAL

### A relative or a friend's legal advice could be wrong

#### IMMIGRATION CORNER



ATTY. MICHAEL GURFINKEL

a friend's "advice" is wrong, can mess up a person's immigration situation, and can put a person in an even worse position than if they had done nothing at all. When people in this situation come to me for consultation, I ask "What law school did your friend or relative go to, that you're following his legal advice?"

Here are some examples of wrong advice by friends that many people followed, only to find themselves in a worse situation:

1. A woman was applying for a visitor's visa, so that she could

attend her parents' 50th wedding anniversary in the US. She was a teacher in the Philippines. She had a stable job, property, etc. However, just before she went to the Embassy for an interview, she was told by friends that she should submit a fake tax return, showing that she was making more money than she actually was, to increase her chances of success in obtaining a visitor's visa. Because this advice came from a friend, she listened, and bought a fake tax return from Recto Street. The Embassy instantly spotted that it was fake, and she was refused the visa, based on fraud, which could carry a lifetime ban. What makes the situation even worse, is that she may have had a good chance of obtaining the visitor's visa, had she simply been truthful, and submitted genuine documents.

2. People came to the US as visitors and wanted to work. They were told by friends or relatives to apply for political asylum

(claiming to be persecuted in the Philippines) or CSS/LULAC (claiming they had been in the US since 1981, and therefore entitled to an "amnesty" green card). By applying for political asylum or CSS/LULAC, they could get work authorization, and everything would be fine. However, in applying for these types of benefits, they had to lie and submit fake papers. But, the friends further advised that, "It's OK, everyone does it, and the CIS will never catch on." Now, people are finding that their applications are being denied, and they are being placed in deportation or removal proceedings by the DHS. In many cases they were qualified for legitimate immigration benefits, such as temporary working visas (H-1B) for college graduates or green cards through Labor Certification (employer-sponsored green cards for professionals and skilled workers). But, they messed up their case, by listening to the

advice of friends, instead of attorneys.

The bottom line is that when you are sick, don't you go to a doctor? When you have a toothache, don't you go to a dentist? Then why, when you have a legal matter, don't you go to an attorney? If your child needed surgery, would you listen to the advice of a friend as to how to perform the surgery, or, would you go to a surgeon?

Therefore, if you have a legal matter, you should seek the advice of a reputable attorney who can possibly help you in solving it. People should know that their immigration status is perhaps the most important thing in their life in America. Not a day goes by that these people don't think about their immigration status and how their whole future in America is up in the air or in jeopardy until they are finally in valid, legal status.

If their friends tell them to commit fraud and submit fake

documents, will their friends be there when things go wrong and/or when they get placed in removal/deportation? Or will the friend say, "You need an attorney"?

\*\*\*  
Michael J. Gurfinkel is licensed, and an active member of the State Bar of California and New York. All immigration services are provided by, or under the supervision of, an active member of the State Bar of California. Each case is different. The information contained herein (including testimonials, "Success Stories", endorsements and re-enactments) is of a general nature, and is not intended to apply to any particular case, and does not constitute a prediction, warranty, guarantee or legal advice regarding the outcome of your legal matter. No attorney-client relationship is, or shall be, established with any reader.

WEBSITE: www.gurfinkel.com  
Call Toll free to schedule a consultation for anywhere in the US:  
(866) - GURFINKEL  
Four offices to serve you: LOS ANGELES · SAN FRANCISCO · NEW YORK · PHILIPPINES  
(Advertising Supplement)

### Business sentiment improves in second quarter

by DES FERRIOLS  
Philstar.com

ENCOURAGED by initial signs of improvements in the US and global financial markets, business sentiment improved in the second quarter of the year although executives remained cautiously negative.

The latest Business Expectations Survey (BES) conducted by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) showed that sentiment remained firmly negative but there was a small upswing in optimism although not enough to sway overall sentiment.

The BES showed that the latest business confidence index was at -2.6 percent but this was a 21.3-point increase over the previous index recorded at -23.9 percent when business executives were surveyed in February.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said the improvement in sentiment was driven by improving confidence in the US and global financial markets that resulted from a fiscal stimulus package committed by the world's 20 richest nations.

According to Guinigundo, the business sector was also encouraged by the government's Economic Resiliency Plan that included monetary policy easing as well as the deceleration in the inflation rate.

"There were also seasonal factors that contributed to this improvement in sentiment, specifically the expected increase in demand during the summer season and school opening in June," Guinigundo said.

Guinigundo said businesses are generally more optimistic about their prospects in the third quarter of the year when more favorable global trade conditions are expected.

According to the BES results, the employment outlook for the third quarter remained negative at -6.4 percent, indicating that job losses remained imminent.

The BES said the improvement in overall outlook, while remaining negative, was evident across all sectors. Construction was the most optimistic in the second quarter with the index now at three percent while the services sector was at one

percent.

The BES results showed that the export sector showed the biggest improvement in sentiments. The index was still negative at -6.1 percent but this was a 33.7-point improvement from the 39.8-percent index last quarter.

The wholesale sector, however, was at -3.1 percent while the industry sector was at -7.6 percent, higher by an average of 21 points compared with the survey results in the first quarter of this year.

These indices were lower compared to the same period last year however and Guinigundo said this was due to the fact that the economy, in general, was generally better last year. But he added that the quarterly improvement in outlook could be due to the expected increase in demand before classes resume in June.

When asked about their outlook for the third quarter of the year, on the other hand, the BES showed that businesses were anticipating an economic turnaround.

The construction still led all other sectors with the index at 20 percent because construction companies are expecting to benefit from the increase in the government's infrastructure budget this year.

The BES showed that even the wholesale and retail trade sectors—although the least optimistic—had a confidence index of 10.3 percent for the third quarter when compared with the previous quarter and even last year.

Despite the improving sentiments, however, business remained harshly affected by the global slowdown, with capacity utilization declining below 70 percent for the first time in decades, now recorded at 69.2 percent as productive sectors held back in anticipation of a decline in demand.

The BES also showed that businesses still expect access to credit to be tight, with negative sentiments at 7.2 percent. The survey also showed a decline in the number of firms that intended to expand their operations, shown at 16 percent. ■

**HAMER SCION'S MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND SALE!**  
Complimentary BBQ & Drinks This Weekend! Fri-Mon  
Receive an additional \$400 military rebate on all new Scion models!\*

**OVER 30 TO CHOOSE FROM!**

SCION xB SCION tC SCION xD

**RECEIVE \$1000 TOWARD ANY SCION ACCESSORIES WITH PURCHASE OF ANY NEW SCION! \*\***

**WE HONOR AND SALUTE YOU.**

**HAMER SCION**  
11041 Sepulveda Blvd., Mission Hills • 1-888-205-6655  
SALES HOURS: MON-SAT 9:30AM-10PM • SUN 9:30AM-9PM | EXTENDED SERVICE HOURS! PARTS & SERVICE HOURS: MON-FRI 7AM-9PM • SATURDAY 7AM-5PM

**Credit Problems? Call for Pre-Approval: (888) 237-3992 and Ask for Matt Morente www.hamertoyota.com**

**Matt Morente** Floor Manager  
**Reno Reyes** VP Internet Coordinator  
**MaryLou Santiago** Leasing & Sales  
**Paul Nieves** Leasing & Sales  
**Nilo Ortiz** Leasing & Sales  
**Arnold Domingo** Leasing & Sales  
**Wency Magno** Leasing & Sales

#### BUSINESS

#### Quote of the Week

"We were in a situation not incomparable to the Titanic - the iceberg was ahead of us, we knew the iceberg was ahead of us, and we should have taken much more preventive measures, and we should have taken much more early measures to mitigate."

—Jomo Kwame Sundaram, UN assistant secretary-general for economic development speaking on the global economic crisis