

**IN THE  
UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE EIGHTH CIRCUIT**

DOCKET NO. 00-3415

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PEDRO SERA,

APPELLANT,

v.

UNITED STATES,

APPELLEE.

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**BRIEF OF APPELLANT**

BRIGGS AND MORGAN, P.A.  
Patrick S. Williams (#196502)  
2200 First National Bank Building  
332 Minnesota Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101  
(651) 223-6600

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## **SUMMARY OF THE CASE AND REQUEST FOR ORAL ARGUMENT**

This is an appeal of the district court's Order denying Appellant Pedro Sera's ("Sera") motion for reduction of sentence under 28 U.S.C. § 2255. The district court, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 2253, certified two issues that it believed raised debatable questions on the § 2255 motion that had been brought by Sera. The first issue is whether Sera received ineffective assistance of counsel based upon this district court's

## **JURISDICTIONAL STATEMENT**

On September 2, 1998, Appellant Pedro Sera was charged with conspiring to

a

Order of the district court that has been certified for appeal by the district court as identified above.



# 85, at 29). Petitioner was represented in the district court by Paul G. Morreim, Esq. during all stages of the proceedings through and including sentencing. Review of the





motion for such a departure. See July 27, 2000, Order at 5 (citing U.S. SENTENCING GUIDELINES MANUAL § 5K2.0; United States v. Ramirez-Bernal, No. 98-1624, 1999 WL 475565, at \*2 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. July 7, 1999) (unpublished opinion); United States v. Cruz-Ochoa, 85 F.3d 325, 325-26 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1996); United States v. Hernandez-Reyes, 114 F.3d 800, 802 (8<sup>th</sup> WL See

Under the standards set forth by the Supreme Court in Strickland v. Washington, 466 U.S. 668 (1984), Appellant must demonstrate both defective performance by counsel and resulting prejudice. Strickland, 466 U.S. at 687. Representation is "defective" if it is shown that the attorney "made errors so serious that counsel was not functioning as the 'counsel' guaranteed by the Sixth Amendment." Strickland, 466 U.S. at 692. Id. That is, Sera must show that "counsel's representation fell below an objective standard." Id.

hearing on Sera's motion for a two point reduction for a willingness to waive resistance to deportation.

**C. THE**



In conclusion, Sera requests that the Court reverse the district court's denial of his motion under § 2255 to Vacate, Set Aside, or Modify his sentence based upon his district court counsel's ineffective assistance of counsel by failing to move for Sera for a downward departure based upon his willingness to waive resistance to deportation and based upon a fortuitous increase in the severity of his sentence of 18 months (conclusion