



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

HOOPRD 70/6.2.8

OCT 13 2006

Rob Pochert, CEcD, EDFP, Executive Director  
Bellingham Whatcom Economic Development Council  
P.O. Box 2803  
Bellingham, WA 98227

Dear Mr. Pochert:

Pursuant to Section 610 of the Appropriations Act of 1993, the Whatcom Opportunities Regional Center, Inc. (WORC, Inc.) is designated by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) as a regional center to participate in the Immigrant Investor Pilot Program within the geographic area as defined by the legal boundaries which constitute Whatcom County, Washington. The new commercial enterprise investment focus of the WORC, Inc. Regional Center will be on capital investments and job creation in assisted living facilities for the elderly within Whatcom County. Please note, should there be any expansion or change in the scope of investment targets beyond assisted living facilities, this would require a formal written proposal to USCIS to amend your regional center approval and designation to reflect such an expansion of scope of investments through your regional center.

As of this date, aliens seeking immigrant visas through the Immigrant Investor Pilot Program may file individual petitions with USCIS for investment activity through the investment in new commercial enterprises in the for profit business of creating and operating assisted living facilities for the elderly located within the legal geographic boundaries of Whatcom County, Washington. It is noted that almost all of Whatcom County has been designated as a Targeted Employment Area (TEA), according to the State of Washington's Employment Security Division. The minimum capital investment threshold for any individual alien foreign investor into a new commercial enterprise through the WORC, Inc. Regional Center shall be not less than \$500,000 in areas designated as TEAs, while such investments in areas that are not designated as a TEA, Rural Area, or small urban area of 20,000 or less, will be not less than \$1,000,000.

Alien entrepreneurs who file petitions for investment in a new commercial enterprise located in the WORC, Inc. Regional Center area making capital investments in the creation and operation of job-creating assisted living facilities located within Whatcom County, must fulfill all of the requirements set forth in 8 CFR 204.6, except that the petition need not show that the new commercial enterprise directly hired 10 new employees as a result of the alien entrepreneur's investment. This determination has been established by way of the USCIS' acceptance of the

economic analysis which is contained as part of the USCIS-approved WORC, Inc. Regional Center proposal.

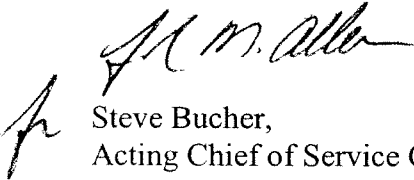
Any individual I-526, Immigrant Petition by Alien Entrepreneur filed with USCIS must demonstrate that it is directly associated or affiliated with the WORC, Inc. Regional Center in order for it to qualify for the "indirect" job creation threshold established through approval of the WORC, Inc. Regional Center. Therefore, in conjunction with addressing the requirements for an individual alien entrepreneur petition, any WORC, Inc. affiliated I-526 petition needs to include as supporting evidence relating to this regional center designation, the following:

1. A copy of this letter of approval and designation.
2. A copy of the approved regional center narrative proposal and business plan.
3. A copy of the approved IMPLAN job creation methodology required in 8 CFR 204.6(j)(4)(iii), as contained in the WORC, Inc. Regional Center application which has been approved by USCIS, which reflects that investment in a new commercial enterprise within the geographic area of the WORC, Inc. Regional Center will generate full-time employment positions, either directly or indirectly, for not fewer than 10 U.S. workers.
4. A signed legally executed and certified copy of the limited partnership agreement between the WORC, Inc. Regional Center and the individual alien investor.
5. On any individually filed petition affiliated with the WORC, Inc. Regional Center, it should also provide information and evidence as to how the offering memorandum entered into by the alien investor, as contained in the I-526 petition, complies with applicable law and Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) requirements which govern such matters.

The approval and designation by USCIS of the WORC, Inc. Regional Center does not reflect any determination on the merits of individual petitions filed by alien entrepreneurs under the Investor Pilot Program. All petitions for alien entrepreneurs who invest within the regional center will be adjudicated by the USCIS on a case-by-case basis and each petition must be fully documented. The individual petitions must be submitted to the California Service Center.

If you have any questions concerning the WORC, Inc. Regional Center's approval and designation by USCIS under the Immigrant Investor Pilot Program, please contact Mr. Maurice Berez, Chief Adjudications Officer, USCIS Investor and Regional Center Program within the Office of Service Center Operations at (202)272-8410.

Sincerely,

  
Steve Bucher,  
Acting Chief of Service Center  
Operations