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Northern District of California**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FORMER CUSTOMS OFFICIAL SENTENCED TO 38 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR FALSELY PASSING
IMMIGRANTS ON CITIZENSHIP TESTS**

SAN FRANCISCO – Abdulaziz Abdulahi Khalil was sentenced, yesterday, to 38 months in prison for accepting kickbacks in exchange for falsely passing citizenship applicants on their United States citizenship tests, United States Attorney Melinda Haag announced.

From 2003 through 2008, Khalil was a District Adjudication Officer (DAO) with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), a Department of Homeland Security agency formerly referred to as Immigration and Naturalization Service. As a DAO, Khalil's responsibilities included personally administering two citizenship tests to applicants whose citizenship applications were randomly assigned to him. The first test was to determine applicants' level of competency with the English language. The second test was to determine whether applicants had adequate knowledge of the United States Constitution. Applicants were required to pass both tests to be eligible for United States citizenship.

In pleading guilty, Khalil admitted that from mid-2003 through at least December 2008, he participated in a scheme to recruit applicants for United States citizenship and to take money from these applicants in exchange for assurances that they would pass their required citizenship tests. Khalil admitted that he used his position as a DAO to gain control over certain citizenship applicants' files in order to carry out, and profit from his scheme.

Khalil pleaded guilty on February 5, 2013, to counts 1-9, 18, and 19 of the Superseding Indictment, which charged him with conspiracy to defraud the United States, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 371 (Count 1), attempted unlawful procurement of citizenship, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1425(a) (Counts 2-9), false certification of citizenship applications, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1015(d) (Count 18), and attempted witness tampering, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1512(a) (Count 19).

The 38-month sentence was handed down by U.S. District Court Judge Richard Seeborg following Khalil's guilty pleas. Judge Seeborg also sentenced the defendant to a three-year period of supervised release to follow his prison term. The defendant was ordered to begin serving his prison sentence on August 30, 2013.

Robin Harris is the Assistant U.S. Attorney who is prosecuting the case with the assistance of legal assistant Rawaty Yim. The prosecution is the result of a two-year investigation by the USCIS, an agency within the Department of Homeland Security.

Further Information:

Case #: CR 11-0462 RS

A copy of this press release may be found on the U.S. Attorney's Office's website at www.usdoj.gov/usao/can.

Electronic court filings and further procedural and docket information are available at <https://ecf.cand.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl>.

Judges' calendars with schedules for upcoming court hearings can be viewed on the court's website at www.cand.uscourts.gov.

All press inquiries to the U.S. Attorney's Office should be directed to Josh Eaton at (415) 436-6958 or by e-mail at josh.eaton@usdoj.gov.