

CAUSE NO. 11-07166

FILED
11 JUN -9 10:29
CLERK OF DISTRICT COURT
DALLAS COUNTY TEXAS
DEPUTY

THE STATE OF TEXAS,
Plaintiff

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF

V.

ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID,
Individually, and d/b/a SAUCEDO
SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD
d/b/a SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES
Defendant

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DALLAS COUNTY, TEXAS

193rd-L

JUDICIAL DISTRICT

**PLAINTIFF'S ORIGINAL PETITION
FOR CIVIL PENALTIES AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF
AND FOR TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER.**

TO THE HONORABLE JUDGE OF SAID COURT:

COMES NOW, the STATE OF TEXAS, ("STATE"), Plaintiff, acting by and through its Attorney General GREG ABBOTT and his Consumer Protection and Public Health Division and files this Original Petition, on behalf of the State of Texas, and on behalf of the interest of the general public of the State of Texas, and complains of ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, Individually, and d/b/a SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD d/b/a SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES, ("DEFENDANT") and for cause of action would respectfully show the Court as follows:

I. SUMMARY OF THE CASE

1.1 Estella Saucedo Cofoid owns, operates and does business as Saucedo Systems Integration, LTD d/b/a Saucedo Latino Services. This business offers immigration services at 8016 Spring Valley Rd., in Dallas, Texas. She also advertises as a "notario publico", as being "certified in immigration law", and holds herself and her company out as providing immigration law services,

despite being neither licensed to practice law nor accredited by the federal Board of Immigration Appeals. Texas law prohibits a non-attorney from practicing law and prohibits a notary public from falsely representing themselves as an attorney or offering legal services as well as advertising as a notary public in any language other than English. Federal law only authorizes attorneys and persons accredited with the Board of Immigration Appeals to charge a fee and provide immigration services to the public. Because of such false, misleading and deceptive business activities, the defendant is charged in this suit with violations of the Texas Deceptive Practices - Consumer Protection Act. By this suit the State seeks a Court ordered injunction to prevent the defendant from engaging in such false, misleading and deceptive business practices and also seeks appropriate civil penalties, attorney's fees and costs.

II. PARTY PLAINTIFF

2.1 The Plaintiff in this suit is the STATE OF TEXAS appearing by and through its Attorney General, Greg Abbott, and under the authority of the Constitution, statutes, and laws of the State of Texas.

III. PARTY DEFENDANT

3.1 The Defendant ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, Individually, does business as, is a principal and owner, and controlling person of SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD d/b/a SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES. **Defendant ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, Individually, and d/b/a SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD d/b/a SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES, may be served with process at her business address of 8016 Spring Valley Rd., Dallas, Dallas County, Texas 75240 or her home address of 1407 Biltmore, Coppell, Dallas County, Texas 75019, or wherever she may be found.**

IV. DISCOVERY CONTROL PLAN

4.1 Discovery in this suit is intended to be conducted under Discovery Level 2 pursuant to TEX. R. CIV. P. 190.1 and 190.3.

V. AUTHORITY AND JURISDICTION

5.1 This action is brought by Attorney General GREG ABBOTT, acting within the scope of his official duties under the authority granted to him under the Constitution and the laws of the State of Texas, through his Consumer Protection & Public Health Division, in the name of the STATE OF TEXAS and in the public interest against defendant for violations of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices - Consumer Protection Act, TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE ANN. § 17.41, *et seq.* (hereinafter “DTPA”), the Notary Public Act, TEX. GOV. CODE ANN. § 406.001, *et seq.* (herein “NPA”), and the State Bar Act, TEX. GOV. CODE ANN. § 81.001, *et seq.* (herein “SBA”). The DTPA § 17.47 grants authority to the Attorney General to seek injunctive relief and civil penalties for violations of its provisions upon the grounds that Defendants have engaged in false, misleading or deceptive acts or practices in the course of trade and commerce as defined in, and declared unlawful by §§17.46(a) and (b) of the DTPA. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to § 17.47(b) of the DTPA.

VI. VENUE

6.1 Venue is proper in Dallas County pursuant to TEX. CIV. PRAC. & REM. CODE § 15.002(a)(1) and (3) because the defendant’s principal place of business is located in Dallas County and because all or a substantial part of events or omissions giving rise to this claim occurred in Dallas County.

6.2 Venue is proper in Dallas county pursuant to Sections 17.47(b) and 17.56[B] of the

DTPA because the transactions in question took place in Dallas County.

VII. TRADE AND COMMERCE

7.1 Defendant is engaged in “trade” and “commerce” as defined by Section 17.45(6) of the DTPA as she operates a notary public and immigration services business in the State of Texas. “Trade” and “Commerce” means the advertising, offering for sale, sale, lease, or distribution of any good or service, of any property, tangible or intangible, real, personal or mixed, and any other article, commodity, or thing of value, wherever situated, and includes any trade or commerce directly affecting the people of this State. TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE §17.45(6).

VIII. PUBLIC INTEREST

8.1 The State has reason to believe that the Defendant has engaged in, is engaging in and will continue to engage in the unlawful practices set forth herein, that Defendant has by means of these unlawful acts and practices, caused damage to and/or acquired money or property from persons, and that defendant caused and will cause adverse effects to legitimate business enterprises which lawfully conduct trade and commerce in this State, thereby directly or indirectly affecting the people of this State. Therefore, pursuant to §17.47(a) of the DTPA, the Consumer Protection and Public Health Division of the Attorney General of the State of Texas believes, and is of the opinion that these proceedings are in the public interest.

IX. PURPOSE OF SUIT AND REQUEST FOR EX PARTE TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER

9.1 The purpose of this suit is to secure a temporary restraining order, temporary and permanent injunctions, and to collect civil penalties from Defendant because Defendant has advertised and offered and provided services in violation of Texas law including the DTPA.

9.2 The State has reason to believe that the Defendant is engaging in, has engaged in, or is about to engage in acts or practices declared to be unlawful pursuant to §17.47(a) of the DTPA, and because these proceedings are in the public interest, the State is seeking a temporary restraining order along with a temporary injunction and a permanent injunction to enjoin Defendant from engaging in further business activities utilizing any false, misleading or deceptive advertising or engaging in unauthorized business activities.

9.3 A Temporary Restraining Order issued without prior notice to Defendant, of this suit or issuance of the Order, is necessary in this case to immediately restrain the violation of law as described. This action is brought seeking a temporary restraining order without prior notice to the Defendant pursuant to §17.47(a) of the DTPA., for reason that a temporary restraining order is necessary because immediate harm and injury are presumed if a law is being violated.¹ If the Defendant is not immediately restrained, Defendant will continue to engage in the unauthorized practice of law and thereby cause immediate and irreparable injury, loss, or damage to persons who receive his services. Namely, the provision of legal services and/or advice by Defendant, a non-attorney, will have dire legal consequence and prejudice the legal rights of persons seeking benefits under U.S. immigration laws. Specifically, Defendant will continue to solicit customers each day

¹ When the State seeks injunctive relief pursuant to an authorized statute [e.g. DTPA §17.47(a)], the Texas Supreme Court has held that the State does not have to prove immediate and irreparable injury. Nor does the Court have to balance equities when the State litigates in the public's interest. When a statute is being violated, it is within the province and duty of the trial court to restrain it. *State v. Texas Pet Foods*, 591 SW2d 800 (Tex. 1979). The State has a relaxed burden because it acts in the public interest. When the State brings an action in the public interest and on behalf of consumers, harm is presumed. *United States v. Odessa Union Warehouse*, 833 F2d 172 (9th Cir. 1987), *Shafer v. United States*, 229 F2d 124 (4th Cir) Cert. Den. 351 US 931 (1956). The statute's express language supercedes the common law injunctive relief elements such as imminent harm or irreparable injury and lack of an adequate remedy at law ... [The State] need only demonstrate to the court its reason to believe that (1) any person is engaging in, has engaged in, or is about to engage in any act or practice declared to be unlawful by the DTPA, and (2) that the proceedings would be in the public interest. *West v. State*, 212 SW3d 513 (Tex.App. - Austin, 2006, no pet.). The state is likewise not required to prove the likelihood of future violations nor is required to show probable injury. *Ibid at 515*. Injunctive relief may be granted to the State upon a showing of only a violation of a statute. *Gulf Holding Corp. v. Brazoria County*, 497 S.W.2d 614 at 619 (Tex. Civ. App. - Houston [14th] 1973, writ ref'd n.r.e.).

and will continue to give legal services and/or advice to her customers when she is not licensed to practice law in the State of Texas or accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals to represent individuals in immigration matters or in proceedings before the immigration courts. Defendant's customers will lose immigration benefits to which they are otherwise entitled and subject them to apprehension, detention or immediate deportation, or expose them to criminal liability as a result of Defendant's unqualified legal services and/or advice in immigration matters.

X. DEFENDANT PREVIOUSLY INFORMED OF WRONGDOING

10.1 Nevertheless, as provided for in §17.47(a) of the DTPA, the State, at least seven days prior to instituting this suit, contacted Defendant in writing to inform her in general of the alleged unlawful conduct, subject of this suit. Said statute does not require the State to notify such a Defendant that court action is or may be under consideration.

XI. ACTS OF AGENTS

11.1 Whenever in this petition it is alleged that Defendant did any act or thing, it is meant that Defendant performed or participated in such act or thing or that such act was performed by the officers, agents, or employees of Defendant, and in each instance, the officers, agents, or employees of Defendant that were then authorized to and did in fact act on behalf of Defendant or otherwise acted under the guidance and direction of the Defendant.

11.2 Defendant ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, Individually, does business as, is the principal and owner, and is the "Chief Executive Officer", of SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD d/b/a SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES. As such, Defendant ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID is a controlling person, directs and has personal knowledge of the day-to-day activities of the business, and has the responsibility of supervising any employees of the business,

the responsibility for the overall management and oversight of the business, including compliance with all state statutes regulating the advertising of notary public services, providing immigration legal services and all other trade and commerce practices, including but not limited to compliance with the DTPA.²

XII. PARTICULAR APPLICABLE LAW

12.1 The Deceptive Trade Practices Act provides that false, misleading, or deceptive acts or practices in the conduct of any trade or commerce are unlawful and subject to action by the Consumer Protection Division. TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE ANN. §17.46(a). False, misleading, or deceptive acts or practices are further defined, in part, to include:

- (2) causing confusion or misunderstanding as to the source, sponsorship, approval, or certification of goods or services;
- (3) causing confusion or misunderstanding as to affiliation, connection, or association with, or certification by, another;
- (5) representing that goods or services have sponsorship, approval, characteristics, ingredients, uses, benefits, or quantities which they do not have;

² Despite the fact that Defendant Estella Saucedo Cofoid does business as and operates her business as a sole proprietorship, and that Sauced Systems Integration, LTD is not a business entity formed under the Texas Business Organizations Code or that of any other state, it is noteworthy that Texas law is well settled that corporate agents may be held personally responsible and individually liable under the DTPA for wrongful acts. *Light v. Wilson*, 663 S.W.2d 813 (Tex. 1983). It is not necessary to pierce the corporate veil in order to impose personal liability. *Leyendecker v. Wechter*, 683 S.W.2d 369 (Tex. 1984). Liability of such a corporate officer is based on his own actions not his status as an agent. It is not necessary for such an employee to act knowingly or intentionally in order to be personally liable. *Miller v. Keyser*, 90 S.W.3d 712 (Tex. 2002). Furthermore, actionable DTPA violations may include both current misrepresentations as well as a failure to perform a future promise. *Formosa Plastics v. Presidio*, 960 S.W.2d 41 (Tex. 1996). DTPA § 17.46(c)(1) authorizes Texas courts to be guided, in actions brought by the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division, to the extent possible, by the interpretations given by the Federal Trade Commission and federal courts to the Federal Trade Commission Act. [15 U.S.C.A. § 45(a)(1)]. Federal courts have often held principals or controlling persons of corporations individually liable under the FTCA for the wrongful and deceptive actions of the businesses they control on the basis that they should have had knowledge or awareness of the misrepresentations. See *FTC v. Amy Travel*, 875 F.2d 564 (7th Cir. 1988), and *FTC v. Publishing Clearing House*, 104 F.3d 1168 (9th Cir. 1997), and *FTC v. American Standard*, 874 F.Supp. 1080 (C.D. Cal. 1994), and *FTC v. Pioneer Enterp.*, 1992 WL 372350 (D. Nev. 1992).

- (7) representing that goods or services are of a particular standard, quality or grade, if they are of another;
- (24) failing to disclose information concerning goods or services which was known at the time of the transaction, to induce the consumer into a transaction into which the consumer would not have entered had the information been disclosed.

TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE ANN. §17.46(b).

12.2 The DTPA provides that it “shall be liberally construed and applied to promote its underlying purposes, which are to protect consumers against false, misleading and deceptive practices, unconscionable actions, and breaches of warranty and to provide efficient and economical procedures to secure such protection”. TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE CODE §17.44 (a).

12.3 The DTPA establishes civil penalties of up to \$20,000 a day for deceptive practices. TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE §17.44 (c)(1).

12.4 The State is exempt from filing a bond. TEX. CIV. PRAC. & REM. CODE § 6.001 and TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE § 17.47(b).

12.5 Federal law provides that aliens may hire either a licensed attorney, an appropriately supervised law student or a person accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), who may charge or accept a fee for representing them in immigration proceedings. 8 C.F.R. § 292.³ Engaging

³ **Accredited Representatives.** An accredited representative is a person who is approved by the Board of Immigration Appeals to represent aliens before the Board, the Immigration Courts, and the Department of Homeland Security. He or she must be a person of good moral character who works for a specific nonprofit religious, charitable, social service, or similar organization which has been recognized by the Board to represent aliens. Accreditation is valid for a period of up to three years and can be renewed. See 8 C.F.R. §§ 1292.1(a)(4), 1292.2(d). Accredited representatives must file a Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Representative Before the Immigration Court (Form EOIR-28) in order to represent an individual before the Immigration Court. See Chapter 2.3(c) (Appearances). Accredited representatives should be careful to use the most current version of the Form EOIR-28, which is available on the Executive Office for Immigration Review website at www.usdoj.gov/eoir. **(a) Qualifying organizations.** — The Board of Immigration Appeals officially recognizes certain nonprofit religious, charitable, social service, and similar organizations as legal service providers. See 8 C.F.R. § 1292.2(a), Chapter 2.2(b) (Legal Service Providers). To be recognized by the Board,

in such business without a license as an attorney or accreditation by the BIA is a violation of the DTPA⁴.

12.6 The Texas Notary Public Act provides that a person commits an offense if the person is a notary public and implies that they are a licensed attorney or solicits or accepts compensation to prepare legal documents for another person for immigration proceedings or any other legal relief from any agency of the State of Texas or the United States. TEX. GOV. CODE § 406.017(a)(1) and (2).⁵ Failure to comply with this requirement is a violation of the DTPA.

12.7 The Texas Notary Public Act further provides that a person commits an offense if the person uses the phrase "notario" or "notario publico" to advertise the services of a notary public, whether by signs, pamphlets, stationery, or other written communication or by radio or television; or advertises the services of a notary public in a language other than English. TEX. GOV. CODE § 406.017(a)(4) and (5).⁶ Failure to comply with this requirement is a violation of the DTPA.

12.8 The State bar of Texas Act provides that a person may not engage in the practice of

an organization must affirmatively apply for that recognition. Such an organization must establish to the satisfaction of the Board that its fees are only nominal, that it does not assess excessive membership dues for persons given assistance, and that it has at its disposal adequate knowledge, information, and experience in immigration law and procedure. The qualifications and procedures for organizations seeking Board recognition are set forth in the regulations. 8 C.F.R. § 1292.2(a), (b). Questions regarding recognition may be directed to the Executive Office for Immigration Review, Office of the General Counsel. See Appendix B (EOIR Directory). (b) *Qualifying representatives*. — The Board of Immigration Appeals accredits persons of good moral character as representatives of qualifying organizations. See 8 C.F.R. § 1292.2(d). Representatives of the recognized organizations are not automatically accredited by the Board. Rather, the recognized organization must affirmatively apply for accreditation on each representative's behalf. See 8 C.F.R. § 1292.2(d). No individual may apply on his or her own behalf. Accreditation is not transferrable from one representative to another, and no individual retains accreditation upon his or her separation from the recognized organization. Section 2.4 Accredited Representatives, *Immigration Court Practice Manual*. www.usdoj.gov/eoir.

⁴ Other actionable remedies or enforcement actions and DTPA remedies are cumulative and not mutually exclusive. *Smith v. Baldwin*, 611 S.W.2d 611 (Tex. 1980). The DTPA expressly provides "An act or practice that is a violation of a provision of law other than this subchapter may be made the basis of an action under this subchapter if the act or practice is proscribed by a provision of the subchapter or is declared unlawful by such other law to be actionable under this subchapter". DTPA § 17.43.

⁵ Note that an offense under this Section is a Class A misdemeanor. Or an offense under this section is a felony of the third degree, if it is shown on the trial of the offense that the defendant has previously been convicted under this section. Failure to comply with this section is, in addition to a violation of any other applicable law of this state, such as a deceptive trade practice actionable under Chapter 17, Business & Commerce Code. By this civil suit the Attorney General is not seeking criminal prosecution of the Defendant.

⁶ See footnote 4 above.

law in the State of Texas unless that person is a member of the State Bar of Texas as a licensed attorney. TEX. GOV. CODE § 81.102. *See Unauthorized Practice Committee v. Cortez*, 692 S.W.2d 47 (Tex. 1985). Failure to comply with this requirement is a violation of the DTPA.

12.9 The "practice of law" means the preparation of a pleading or other document incident to an action or special proceeding or the management of the action or proceeding on behalf of a client before a judge or judicial officer in a court or administrative tribunal as well as a service rendered out of court, including the giving of advice or the rendering of any service requiring the use of legal skill or knowledge, such as preparing a will, contract, or other instrument, the legal effect of which under the facts and conclusions involved must be carefully determined. *See* TEX. GOV. CODE § 81.101(a).

XIII. FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

13.1 Defendant ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, Individually operates a storefront notary public and immigration service business in the State of Texas doing business as an individual sole proprietorship under the assumed name of SAUCEDO INTEGRATION SYSTEMS, LTD d/b/a SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES with a business address of 8016 Spring Valley Rd., Dallas, Dallas County, Texas 75240.

13.2 On or before at least March 18, 2011 through the present, Defendant publicly advertised her said notary public and immigration service provider business and engaged in the provision of such business services at her business address. Defendant advertises such business services on the storefront of her business address and additionally advertises such business services on the internet at her company website www.saucedoservices.com.

13.3 Defendant advertises her Notary Public business in the Spanish language using the

term “Notario Publico”, a term which signifies a licensed attorney in Mexico. Defendant is not an attorney licensed to practice law in Texas, in any other state or before any federal court of the United States.

13.4 Defendant represents that she has received training in immigration law at the ‘Washington Learning Institute’, which in truth and fact is the Washington Online Learning Institute with a website at www.woli.edu, and which is not a school of law of any sort and from which no accredited law degrees are conferred, and from which no certification or license provides any authority to practice immigration or other law.

13.5 Among other things, the Defendant provides counseling regarding U.S. immigration laws and procedures, for a fee. Defendant targets and solicits persons attempting to immigrate and/or obtain residency in the U.S. as well as the friends and family members of such persons.

13.6 Defendant represents to consumers that she is qualified to prepare all of their applications, forms and other pertinent documentation as required by the immigration laws of this country. However Defendant fails to inform consumers that she is not authorized or qualified to provide such services.

13.7 To represent consumers on Immigration matters legally, one must be a licensed attorney, an appropriately supervised law student, or a person accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals. 8 C.F.R. § 292. Defendant is not an attorney or law student and is not accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals to represent persons in a proceeding relating to immigration to the U.S., or obtaining citizenship or other related matter. Defendant does not appear on the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) Roster of Recognized Organizations and Accredited Representatives at www.justice.gov/eoir/press/08/AcreditationFactSheet102708.pdf. Defendant is also not qualified

under 8 C.F.R. §292 to represent consumers because she receives remuneration from consumers on immigration matters while having no pre-existing relationship or connection with such persons entitled to the representation. Defendant has failed to obtain permission from The Board of Immigration Appeals to act as the representative of said consumers.

13.8 Defendant provides legal advice and prepares visa applications and other legal documentation for consumers, for a fee. The Defendant does not, and has not possessed the certification, license, or other qualifications necessary to perform such services.

13.9 Defendant is not licensed by the State Bar of Texas to practice as an attorney in the State of Texas, nor has she at all relevant times worked under the direct daily supervision of a licensed attorney.

13.10 Defendant's failure to disclose her lack of authority and accreditation is intended to induce consumers into transactions which they would not have entered if the information had been disclosed to them.

13.11 Defendant advertises these services primarily in the Spanish language, but does not include a notice that she is not an attorney in the advertisements. Defendant also fails to include the amount of fees required for each service.

13.12 In support of these allegations of fact, the State relies upon the investigators affidavit attached hereto as Exhibit 'A', and incorporated herein for all purposes.

XIV. VIOLATIONS OF THE DTPA

14.1 Based on the conduct alleged above, Defendant has directly and indirectly engaged in false, misleading, and deceptive acts and practices declared unlawful by §17.46(a), (b) and §17.08 of the DTPA, including, but not limited to:

- A. causing confusion or misunderstanding as to the source, sponsorship, approval, or certification of goods or services by stating or implying falsely that Defendant is;
 - 1. an attorney licensed to practice law in this State or that Defendant has an attorney on staff to assist her with immigration related matters in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(2);
 - 2. able to otherwise comply with the requisites of 8 C.F.R. § 292 by functioning as a properly supervised law student, or by accreditation by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(2);

- B. causing confusion or misunderstanding as to affiliation, connection, or association with, or certification by, another, by Defendant;
 - 1. advertising, offering for sale, selling, or providing an immigration service in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(3);
 - 2. accepting money or valuable consideration for performing an immigration service in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(3);
 - 3. accepting money or valuable consideration from any person seeking assistance to obtain a benefit under U.S. immigration laws for himself or any other person in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(3);
 - 4. advising any person whether or not to file a petition, application, or other form to obtain a benefit under U.S. immigration laws for himself or any other person in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(3);
 - 5. preparing for any person a petition, application or other form to obtain a benefit under U.S. immigration laws for himself or any other person in

violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(3);

C. representing that goods or services have sponsorship, approval, characteristics, ingredients, uses, benefits, or quantities which they do not have by;

1. representing, directly or by implication, that Defendant can obtain legal status, a work permit, or other benefit under U.S. immigration laws for a person who purchases her services in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(5);
2. representing to any person, expressly or by implication, that Defendant can or will represent the interest of another in a judicial or administrative proceeding, including a proceeding relating to immigration to the United States, U.S. citizenship, or any other Immigration related matter (including alien temporary or permanent employment or travel) in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(5);

D. representing that goods or services are of a particular standard, quality or grade, if they are of another, by Defendant;

1. holding themselves out, by advertising or by any means, to the public as an “immigration specialist,” “immigration counselor,” “immigration services provider” or “immigration consultant” or by any title or designation incorporating the word “immigration” or an abbreviation thereof in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(7);
2. representing, directly or by implication, that Defendant has the skill, expertise, or competence to handle immigration matters in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(7);

- E. failing to disclose information concerning goods or services which was known at the time of the transaction, to induce the consumer into a transaction into which the consumer would not have entered had the information been disclosed, by Defendant;
1. providing or giving persons advice and counsel regarding their rights under the immigration laws of the United States or any other sort of legal matter while falsely purporting to be qualified to do so in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(24);
 2. soliciting, collecting, or accepting fees or compensation of any type, for providing any type of immigration or legal services to consumers while falsely purporting to be qualified to do so in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(24);
 3. representing, expressly or by implication, that Defendant is able to provide or obtain undetectable counterfeit documents for persons wishing to immigrate to the U.S. which will aid such person to gain employment, residency, citizenship, or other benefit in violation of DTPA §17.46(b)(24);

14.2. Based on the conduct alleged above, Defendant has additionally directly and indirectly engaged in false, misleading, and deceptive acts and practices declared unlawful by DTPA §17.46(a), by representing or implying that as a notary public that they are a licensed attorney and solicits or accepts compensation to prepare legal documents for another person for immigration proceedings or any other legal relief from any agency of the State of Texas or the United States in violation of TEX. GOV. CODE § 406.017(a).

14.3 Based on the conduct alleged above, Defendant has additionally directly and

indirectly engaged in false, misleading, and deceptive acts and practices declared unlawful by DTPA §17.46(a), by using the phrase "notario" or "notario publico" to advertise the services of a notary public, whether by signs, pamphlets, stationery, or other written communication or by radio or television in Spanish or in a language other than English in violation of TEX. GOV. CODE § 406.017(a).

14.4 Based on the conduct alleged above, Defendant has additionally directly engaged in false, misleading, and deceptive acts and practices declared unlawful by DTPA §17.46(a), by engaging in the practice of law in the State of Texas while not a member of the State Bar of Texas as a licensed attorney in violation of TEX. GOV. CODE § 81.102.

XV. INJURY TO CONSUMERS

15.1 By means of the foregoing false, misleading, and deceptive acts and practices, in violation of Texas law, Defendant has acquired money or other property from identifiable persons to whom such money or property should be restored, or who in the alternative are entitled to an award of damages.

XVI. DISGORGEMENT

16.1 All of the Defendant's assets are subject to the equitable remedy of disgorgement, which is the forced relinquishment of all benefits that would be unjust for Defendant to retain, including all ill-gotten gains and benefits or profits that result from Defendant putting fraudulently converted property to a profitable use. Defendant should be ordered to disgorge all monies fraudulently taken from individuals and businesses together with all of the proceeds, profits, income, interest and accessions thereto. Such disgorgement should be for the benefit of victimized consumers and the State of Texas.

XVII. REPATRIATION OF ASSETS

17.1 After due notice and a hearing, the court should order that all of the Defendant's assets situated outside the jurisdiction of this Court be deposited or repatriated into an appropriate financial institution within the jurisdiction of this Court.

XVIII. REQUEST FOR FINDINGS OF ACTUAL FRAUD AND FALSE REPRESENTATION

18.1 The Court should make findings at the conclusion of this case that the Defendant engaged in actual fraud and false representations in that Defendant has made repeated and materially false representations to the public concerning the issues of immigration and the ability of Defendant to represent and/or assist consumers in immigration documentation and proceedings, which was known to be false when made. Such false representations were made with the intention that they be acted upon by the parties to whom the misrepresentations were made. Reliance upon these false representations has resulted in injury to multiple consumers across the United States as well as in the State of Texas, and violates laws enacted by the State of Texas to protect the legal profession and citizens from non-licensed individuals practicing law.

IXX. TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF NECESSARY

19.1 The State's application for a temporary restraining order is authorized by Section 17.47 of the DTPA. TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE CODE §17.47(a).

19.2 Pursuant to § 17.47 of the DTPA, the State requests that the Court grant a temporary restraining order, temporary injunction, and permanent injunction, enjoining Defendant, their officers, agents, servants, and employees from violating Texas law by advertising as a "notario publico" and or attempting to solicit and provide immigration services to any more consumers, as

well as enjoining the Defendants from future operation of their notary public and immigration services business without being qualified as an attorney duly licensed to practice law in Texas or by being accredited as an Immigration Services provider by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals⁷ Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated herein, is an affidavit in support of this request for injunctive relief.

19.3 Section 17.47(a) of the DTPA authorizes the State to seek injunctive relief, including a temporary restraining order, whenever the State has reason to believe that the Defendant is, has, or will engage in unlawful acts or practices in violation of the DTPA. Said statute does not require the State to notify such a Defendant that court action is or may be under consideration. Therefore no notice of this suit and application for temporary restraining order pursuant to Dallas County Civil Courts Local Rule 2.02(a) and(b), has or will be presented to the opposing parties before the application and proposed order are to be presented to the Court for decision, for reason that the statutory provision supercedes the local rule. A temporary restraining order is necessary because immediate harm and injury are presumed if a law is being violated.⁸ Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated herein, is an affidavit in support of this request for injunctive relief.

19.4 It is essential that the Court immediately and temporarily restrain Defendant from continuing with the conduct described in this petition, namely the unauthorized practice of law. It is essential that the Court act immediately, prior to notice to defendant and a hearing on the matter, because Defendant will continue to engage in the unauthorized practice of law and thereby cause

7 See footnote 1 above.

8 See footnote 1 above.

immediate and irreparable injury, loss, or damage to persons who receive her services. Namely, the provision of legal services and/or advice by Defendant, a non-attorney, will have dire legal consequences and prejudice the legal rights of persons seeking benefits under U.S. immigration laws. Specifically, Defendant will continue to solicit customers each day and will continue to give legal services and/or advice to her customers when she is not licensed to practice law in the State of Texas or accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals to represent individuals in immigration matters or in proceedings before the immigration courts. Defendant's customers will lose immigration benefits to which they are otherwise entitled and subject them to apprehension, detention or immediate deportation, or expose them to criminal liability as a result of his unqualified legal services and/or advice in immigration matters.

19.5 Pursuant to Dallas County Civil Courts Local Rule 2.02(c), the undersigned counsel hereby certifies that to the best of counsel's knowledge, this case in which the application for temporary restraining order is presented, is not subject to transfer under Dallas County Civil Courts Local Rule 1.06.

19.6 The State asserts good cause exists for the modification of the rules of discovery pursuant to TEX. RULE CIV. PROC. 191.1. The State requests leave of Court to engage in discovery, issue subpoena's, take telephonic, video, written, and other depositions, and require production of documents in connection therewith, prior to any scheduled temporary injunction hearing upon reasonable shortened notice to the Defendants.

19.7 The State requests that the Clerk of the Court issue such Writs of Injunction and/or Writs of Restraint pursuant to any Injunction or Temporary Restraining Order issued by this Court in conformity with the law, and that same be issued and be effective without the execution and filing

of a bond as Plaintiff, the State of Texas, is exempt from such bonds under TEX. BUS. & COM. CODE ANN. § 17.46(b).

XX. PRAYER

20.1 WHEREFORE PREMISES CONSIDERED, Plaintiff, the State of Texas, respectfully prays and requests that Defendant, ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, Individually, and d/b/a SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD d/b/a SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES, be cited according to law to appear and answer herein; that a Temporary Restraining Order be issued by the Court ordering the Defendant to appear for Temporary Injunction Hearing within 14 days therefrom; that leave be granted for the State to engage in discovery prior to the Temporary Injunction Hearing; that a Temporary Injunction be issued; that this matter be set for trial; and upon final hearing a Permanent Injunction be issued, restraining and enjoining Defendant, her successors, assigns, officers, agents, servants, employees, and representatives from making representations, doing the acts, and engaging in the unlawful practices set out in the preceding paragraphs as well as from making the following representations and doing the following acts and engaging in the following practices and conduct of trade or commerce within the State of Texas as follows:

- A. Transferring, concealing, withholding, destroying, mutilating, altering, falsifying or removing from the jurisdiction of this Court any books, records, documents, invoices, receipts or other written materials relating to Defendant's business, during the pendency of this suit, which currently or hereafter are in Defendant's possession, custody, or control except in response to further orders or subpoenas in this cause;
- B. Operating a business or conducting business that provides immigration services or a legal document preparation service until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;
- C. Advertising, offering for sale, selling, or providing an immigration service or a legal document preparation service until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by

becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

D. Accepting money or valuable consideration for performing an immigration service or a legal document preparation service until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

E. Accepting money or valuable consideration from any person seeking assistance to obtain a benefit under United States immigration laws for himself/herself or any other person until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

F. Advising or counseling any person whether or not to file a petition, application, or other form to obtain a benefit under United States immigration laws for himself/herself or any other person until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

G. Selecting, preparing, or completing for any other person a pleading, document, or other form incident to legal actions or United States immigration proceedings until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

H. Holding herself out, by any means, to the public as an “immigration specialist,” “immigration counselor,” or “immigration service provider” and by any title or designation incorporating the word “immigration” or an abbreviation thereof until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

I. Stating or implying that Defendant is an attorney licensed to practice law in this state unless Defendant is a member of the State Bar of Texas;

J. Representing, directly or by implication, that Defendant has the skill, expertise, or competence to handle immigration or legal matters until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

K. Representing, directly or by implication, that Defendant can obtain legal status, a work permit, or other benefit under United States immigration laws for a person who purchases her services until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by

becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

L. Practicing law in the State of Texas while not being a member of the State Bar of Texas;

M. Advising or counseling any person as to matters of law or legal rights under state or federal laws, rules, and/or regulations, including but not limited to, matters relating to legal actions or United States immigration proceedings until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

N. Accepting or soliciting money or valuable consideration for advising or counseling any person as to matters of law or legal rights under state or federal laws, rules, and/or regulations, including but not limited to, matters relating to legal actions or United States immigration proceedings until Defendant is able to fully comply with applicable law by becoming a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, or by becoming accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals;

O. Advertising the services of a notary public in a language other than English, whether by signs, pamphlets, stationery, or other written communication or by radio or television, without posting or otherwise including with the advertisement a notice which must include the fees that a notary public may charge and the following statement in English and in the language of the advertisement and in letters of a conspicuous size:

"I AM NOT AN ATTORNEY LICENSED TO PRACTICE LAW IN TEXAS AND MAY NOT GIVE LEGAL ADVICE OR ACCEPT FEES FOR LEGAL ADVICE.";

P. Accepting money or valuable consideration for performing a notarial service while advertising the services of a notary public in a language other than English without complying with the disclosure requirements of "O" above;

Q. Representing, directly or by implication, that this Court, the Bureau of Citizenship & Immigration Services (also known as the Immigration and Naturalization Service), or the Office of the Attorney General has approved any good or service sold or offered for sale by Defendant, or approved of any of Defendant's business practices.

20.2. The State further prays that this Court order Defendant to post notice at 8016 Spring Valley Rd., Dallas, Dallas County, Texas 75240, and at any other place where defendant may conduct business, during the pendency of this suit, which notice shall be on the front-side of the front

door. in bold-faced type of a minimum size of 16 points, in both English and Spanish, and shall state:

NOTICE

ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, INDIVIDUALLY, AND D/B/A SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD D/B/A SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES HAS BEEN SUED BY THE OFFICE OF THE TEXAS ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR ENGAGING IN THE UNAUTHORIZED PRACTICE OF IMMIGRATION LAW.

THE DISTRICT COURT HAS ORDERED ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, INDIVIDUALLY, AND D/B/A SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD D/B/A SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES TO STOP CONDUCTING BUSINESS AS AN IMMIGRATION SERVICE PROVIDER.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, OR IF YOU BELIEVE YOU WERE A VICTIM, PLEASE CALL 214-969-5310.

ADVISO

ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, INDIVIDUALLY, AND D/B/A SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD D/B/A SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES HA SIDO DEMANDADA POR LA OFICINA DEL PROCURADOR GENERAL DE TEXAS POR ENVOLUCRARSE EN LA PRACTICA DE LEYES DE INMIGRACION SIN AUTORIZACION.

LA CORTE DEL DISTRICTO HA ORDENADO A ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, INDIVIDUALLY, AND D/B/A SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD D/B/A SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES DE PARAR SU NEGOCIO DE SERVICIOS DE INMIGRACION.

SI USTED TIENE ALGUNA PREGUNTA O PIENSA QUE FUE UNA VICTIMA, POR FAVOR LLAME AL 214-969-5310.

20.2 The State respectfully further prays and requests that the Court award judgment against the Defendant, ESTELLA SAUCEDO COFOID, Individually, and d/b/a SAUCEDO SYSTEMS INTEGRATION, LTD d/b/a SAUCEDO LATINO SERVICES, as follows:

- A. That Defendant be adjudged and ordered to pay to the State civil penalties of up to \$20,000 for each and every violation of the DTPA, pursuant to sections 17.08 and 17.47(c)(1) of the Texas Business and Commerce Code;

- B. That Defendant be adjudged and ordered to pay to the State civil penalties in the amount of not more than \$250,000.00 for violations of the DTPA if the consumer was 65 years of age or older pursuant to section 7.47(c)(2) of the Texas Business and Commerce Code;
- C. That Defendant be adjudged and ordered to pay the State attorney's fees and costs of Court as provided by the laws of the State of Texas, including but not limited to, TEX. GOV. CODE ANN. §402.006(c);
- D. That Defendant be adjudged and ordered to pay and restore all money or other property taken from identifiable persons by means of unlawful acts or practices, or in the alternative, award judgment for damages to compensate for such losses;
- E. That Defendant be adjudged and ordered to pay pre-judgment interest on all awards of restitution, damages, and civil penalties as provided by law;

20.3 The State further prays that upon hearing that Defendant's assets be repatriated into the jurisdiction of this Court, that Defendant's assets be subject to disgorgement, and that an equitable lien be placed upon Defendant's property for the benefit of consumer victims;

20.4 The State further prays that upon hearing that this Court rescind all agreements entered into by and between Defendant and consumers;

20.5 The State further prays that upon hearing that this Court adjudge that all fines, penalties or forfeitures payable to and for the benefit of the State are not dischargeable under bankruptcy pursuant to 11 U.S.C. § 523(a)(7).

20.6 The State further prays for the appointment of a Temporary and Permanent Receiver, as may become necessary, to locate, conserve and manage Defendants's assets so as to minimize harm to consumers who contracted with Defendant, and as may be necessary to comply with and obey any Orders and Judgments issued by the Court.

20.7 The State prays leave of Court to engage in discovery, issue subpoena's, take telephonic, video, written, and other depositions, and require production of documents in connection

therewith, prior to any scheduled temporary injunction hearing upon reasonable shortened notice to the Defendants.

20.8 The State prays that all relief be denied Defendant and that the State receive such other and further relief to which it is justly entitled.

Respectfully submitted,

GREG ABBOTT
Attorney General of Texas

DANIEL HODGE
First Assistant Attorney General

DAVID MORALES
Deputy First Assistant Attorney General

BILL COBB
Deputy Attorney General for Civil Litigation

PAUL D. CARMONA, Chief
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ATTORNEYS FOR PLAINTIFF
THE STATE OF TEXAS

ATTACHED EXHIBIT:

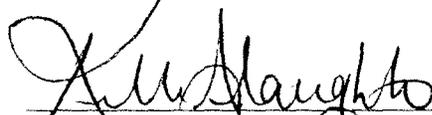
EXHIBIT A Verification (pursuant to Tex. Rules of Civil Procedure 680 and 682).

EXHIBIT A

VERIFICATION

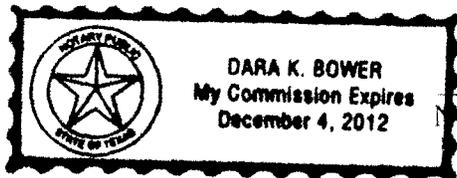
STATE OF TEXAS §
§
COUNTY OF DALLAS §

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared the below named affiant, who, after being duly sworn, stated under oath that (s)he is competent and authorized to make this verification on behalf of the State of Texas, Plaintiff in this action; that (s)he is an Investigator for the Attorney General of the State of Texas; that (s)he has read the forgoing pleading; that she has reason to believe and is of the opinion that every statement of factual allegations concerning the violations of law by Defendant contained in the pleading is credibly and reliably true and correct, are matters observed pursuant to a legal duty to report, are factual findings resulting from an investigation made pursuant to authority granted by law, or are matters of records, reports, statements, or data compilations of public offices or agencies setting forth the activities of the office or agency; that Defendant operated a notary public and immigration service provider business in Dallas County; advertised as “notario publico”, is neither a licensed attorney, a properly supervised law student, nor is accredited by the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals entitled to practice immigration law nor is authorized to provide accredited immigration services to consumers; and further that the consumer protection division believes that such an emergency exists such that irreparable harm is imminent and or that relevant records may be removed, secreted or destroyed, and immediate and irreparable injury, loss, or damage would occur as a result of a delay in obtaining a temporary restraining order; and further that a temporary restraining order is necessary because immediate harm and injury are presumed if a law is being violated.



KELLE SLAUGHTER, Investigator
Affiant

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me, on the 3 day of June, 2011, to certify which witness my hand and official seal.





Notary Public in and for the State of Texas