

Parlak Ruling Leaves Supporters in Disbelief

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Berrien County, MI - The Department of Homeland Security jailed Ibrahim Parlak five months ago. He was charged with seven deportable offenses namely, having ties to terrorists. Earlier this month, Parlak had a deportation hearing in Detroit's Immigration Court and on Wednesday afternoon, immigration Judge Elizabeth Hacker ruled against Parlak on all seven counts, which means he will be deported back to Turkey.

Turkey is the country where, as a cultural minority, Parlak fought for Kurdish freedom and was imprisoned. Now his family and friends fear what will happen if he is sent back.

"In the beginning we didn't have much faith in this court," said Martin Dzuris, Parlak's spokesperson.

Despite that, Parlak's family and friends always felt optimistic about how the immigration judge would rule.

"We were actually hopeful that the judge was going to rule in our favor," added Dzuris.

However, after the judge sided with the Department of Homeland Security, the Kurdish restaurant owner faces deportation.

"We are disappointed but we are not crushed because we are going to keep on going and we think we have a very good chance in the appellate process, the court of appeals," said John Smietanka, Parlak's attorney.

The government accuses Parlak of being a threat to national security, stating he has ties to the PKK and was granted political asylum by the U.S. under false pretenses.

The judge was convinced.

Mark Jebson, the Assistant Chief Counsel for Immigration and Customs Enforcement said, "We feel satisfied with the outcome, the evidence was overwhelming and the judge came to the correct conclusion."

A conclusion that makes Dzuris, a former immigrant himself, doubt if America is truly the land of the free.

"Now I'm in disbelief, I just can't believe the United States would turn back on what it's founded upon," said Dzuris.

Parlak and his attorneys have 30 days to appeal the judge's ruling. If they do not, Parlak will be deported back to Turkey.

The appeal will be handled by the Board of Immigration, which consists of a panel of judges from the Washington D.C. area.

Depending on their ruling, Parlak may be able to appeal to the Federal Court of Appeals 6th Circuit in Cincinnati.