

United States Department of Justice

**For Immediate Release**

May 7, 2010 **United States Attorney's Office**  
**Southern District of Florida**

## **Former West Palm Beach Spa Owner Pleads Guilty to Harboring Illegal Aliens and Money Laundering**

Wifredo A. Ferrer, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida; Anthony V. Mangione, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Office of Investigations; Daniel W. Auer, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation Division (IRS-CID); John V. Gillies, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Miami Field Office; and Ric L. Bradshaw, Sheriff, Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO), today announced that defendant Mal Suk Kim, 60, of Palm Beach County, pled guilty today to a criminal information, charging her with one count of harboring illegal aliens and one count of money laundering, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Sections 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii), 1324(a)(1)(B)(I), and Title 18, United States Code, Section 1956(a)(1)(A)(I), respectively. Defendant Kim also agreed to forfeit \$150,000 involved in the money laundering offense to which she pled guilty.

According to court documents and statements made in court in connection with the plea hearing, on September 30, 2008, special agents from ICE, IRS-CID, FBI, and deputies from PBSO executed federal search warrants at Coral Spa, located at 4730 Okeechobee Boulevard, West Palm Beach, and the Wellington residence of another individual, of Hannah Eun Sung Chong, 50.

Defendant Kim owned 50 percent of Coral Spa until February 26, 2008, when she sold her 50 percent share of the business to Chong. Documents filed with the court show that defendant Kim hired two undocumented aliens to work and live at Coral Spa, without having them complete any paperwork or job application, and without regard to their immigration status. Customers paid Chong for the work performed by the illegal aliens at the Coral Spa, and Chong, in turn, paid a portion of those proceeds to defendant Kim. Defendant Kim knew that the money she was receiving was generated by the work of these illegal aliens.

Defendant Kim is scheduled for sentencing before the U.S. District Court Judge Donald M. Middlebrooks on July 20, 2010. At sentencing, she faces a statutory maximum term of imprisonment of up to 10 years on the harboring count and up to 20 years on the money laundering count.

Chong previously pled guilty on March 6, 2009 to a superseding information, also charging her with harboring illegal aliens and money laundering. Chong is scheduled to be sentenced on July 8, 2010, before U.S. District Court Judge Kenneth L. Ryskamp.

Special Agent in Charge John V. Gillies of the FBI Miami Division stated, "Our immigration

laws exist to protect not only our national security, but the rights of those that come here legally. When individuals are here illegally, it can lead to abuse of the workers. The FBI and its partners are committed to leveraging our resources to keep our country safe and safeguard the rights of all.”

Mr. Ferrer commended the investigative efforts of ICE’s Office of Investigations in West Palm Beach, the IRS-CID, FBI, and the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney John C. McMillan.