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3 sentenced in Cuban travel scheme

A Florida businessman will spend more than two years in prison for his role in a scheme to use fake religious organizations to get thousands of people permission to travel to Cuba.

A federal judge sentenced Victor Vazquez, 40, of Pompano Beach, to 2 1/2 years in prison Friday. He was accused of bypassing a travel ban to Cuba that has been in place for more than four decades, illegally obtaining the special religious travel licenses for nonexistent churches. He and a partner then provided the licenses to travel agencies, which sold the use of them, according to a report. Vazquez had previously pleaded guilty of conspiring to defraud the U.S. government.

Two others implicated in the scheme also received their sentences Friday. Vazquez's ex-wife, Kekalani Vazquez, received three years of probation for her participation and Hialeah travel agent Yury Rodriguez received one year and one day in prison.

Another man implicated in the scheme, 76-year-old David Margolis, is scheduled to be sentenced Monday. He pleaded guilty to a charge of filing a false government application.

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