

Georgia state senator's wife faces deportation to Colombia She is in hiding, and her husband and lawyer say they don't know her whereabouts.

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Byline: By Giovanna Dell'orto THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Body

State Sen. Curt Thompson has been a strong advocate of immigration rights, once speaking in Spanish from the steps of the **Georgia** Capitol against the adoption of some of the nation's strictest immigration controls.

Now Thompson's **s** Colombian-born **wife** is in **hiding** as federal immigration officials try to **deport** her.

Sascha Herrera, 28, has been in **hiding** since Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers arrived at her home Nov. 28 with an order to remove her from the U.**S**. She was not home at the time.

Her attorney, Charles Kuck, claims she was duped by a man handling her immigration requests (a notario) and that her **deportation** order is a clerical error. He **says** neither he nor her **husband know** where Herrera is.

Kuck plans to file a petition to reopen her **deportation** case, arguing that a man she had sought help from filed an asylum petition on her behalf without her knowledge and before her **husband** sponsored her green card application based on their marriage in April.

The **deportation** order stems from Herrera's repeated failure to appear before a judge on the asylum application, which Kuck **said** she did not **know** had been filed.

The case hinges on whether Herrera received a notice to appear in court, and whether the asylum application could have been filed without her knowledge, **said** Victor Cerda, former general counsel for Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

She met Thompson last year and they got married in April, when he applied for her to become a permanent resident. She had held a student visa at the time, after coming to the United **States** on a visitor visa.

Cerda **said** the **deportation** order in the asylum case would trump any pending green card application and trigger mandatory detention.

According to Kuck, Herrera came to the U.**S**. - where her parents have been living - on a visitor visa in early 2003. She applied for an extension to the visa through a "notario" - a man who claimed he was qualified to handle legal immigration matters - but did not get it until 20 days before the extension was due to expire.

The notario then suggested an asylum application, which Herrera signed, but she got a "bad vibe" from the man and decided not to proceed, Kuck **said**.

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