

## **No help for man facing deportation U.S. judge says she has no jurisdiction in case of German immigrant who is a father here.**

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### **Body**

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St. Louis - A **German immigrant** moved a step closer to a **deportation** that he **says** would tear apart his family after a federal **judge** ruled Tuesday that she cannot to **help** him.

Stefan Lang, 37, a house painter who lives in Florissant, asked last month for a court order to force immigration authorities to let him appeal his removal, and to stay in the meantime.

**U.S.** District **Judge** Catherine D. Perry **said** she has **no jurisdiction** because the paperwork to adjust his immigration status was not filed on time back in 1998.

"Were I free to decide whether Lang - by all accounts a devoted **father** - should be granted lawful permanent resident status, I might well conclude that he could remain in the **United States**," Perry wrote in her order. "That decision, however, cannot be made by me. ... I cannot exercise **jurisdiction** where Congress has not provided it."

Lang's lawyer, Raymond Bolourtchi, **said** they would take the **case** to the 8th **U.S.** Circuit Court of Appeals and ask for mercy from the new leaders at the Department of Homeland Security.

"We're going to keep this going as far as we can keep it alive," Bolourtchi **said**.

Lang has permission to remain in the country for about a month, the lawyer **said**, and will ask for an additional stay until the **case** reaches final resolution.

Lang, who married an American during a visit to St. Louis in 1998, testified in court that he signed his immigration documents on time but that his then-attorney filed them five days too late.

As a result, he lost the right to appeal immigration decisions, Perry **said**.

In 1999, Lang got a "green card" allowing him to stay. It was withdrawn three years later, after his then-wife, Melva Dorsey, wrote a letter to immigration officials after a lovers' spat, withdrawing her sponsorship. She has since testified on his behalf.

After Lang and Dorsey split up in 2004, Lang became full-time **father** of their daughter and of her daughter from an earlier relationship. Because of concerns about the ability of the girls' mother or their grandparents to take over, the family fears Lang's **deportation** would leave the children wards of the state.

Lang **said** he did not learn for seven years that the government was seeking to **deport** him. In November, he got a letter **saying** officials were seeking his immediate removal.

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The girls, Isabell, 9, and Andy, 12, both have written to Barack Obama asking for his help.

## Graphic

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PHOTO - Lang

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