



Roland Sylvain



In 1985, Roland came to the U.S. as a **lawful permanent resident** when he was just 7 years old with his parents who are both US citizens.



Roland has been married to his U.S. citizen wife for four years and is the sole financial support for his four young children who are also U.S. citizens. Roland is also an integral member of his large tight-knit extended family.



In 2001, Roland was pulled over for speeding in Virginia. Roland panicked and signed his cousin's name who had been sitting in the passenger seat. Roland then told the police officer that he panicked and signed his cousin's name instead of his own. He was arrested and charged with **forging public records**. His lawyer recommended he take the **plea**. Roland received a 1 and a half year suspended sentence for each ticket. He served no jail time.

This was the only criminal conviction Roland has ever had.

In the following years, Roland worked hard to build his career and family. Roland has worked as a lab technician for over 15 years and was later promoted to supervisor.



In addition to his primary job, Roland and his wife started a small business. The family goes to church every week and donates much of their business's proceeds to a school in Haiti.



In 2011, Roland, his pregnant wife, and twenty of his family members decided to take a cruise. When they returned to Florida, Roland was taken to an immigration office where his prints and greencard were taken. Roland is now in removal proceedings and charged with an **"aggravated felony"** based on his ticket from ten years ago. The judge is unable to hear any of his individual circumstances and Roland now faces imminent deportation to Haiti.

Meanwhile, Roland's mental and physical health is **deteriorating** from the stress of his deportation. The ordeal has been a major financial and emotional strain on his entire family.

None of the current immigration bills would protect Roland from deportation. Congress should create a fair and inclusive path that allows immigrants like Roland to maintain and pursue legal status rather than expand the number of reasons to deport them.

FACT

On average, deported green card holder parents have lived in the United States over ten years. [1]

FACT

72% of those who were deported between 1997 and 2007 were deported for non-violent offenses. [2]

FACT

97% of federal convictions and 94% of state convictions are the result of guilty pleas. All too often, immigrants only have a few minutes to consult with their criminal defender and are not aware of the harsh immigration consequences of pleading guilty to criminal charges. [3]

FACT

Roland's nearly 10 year-old conviction, which was already suspended, constitutes a so-called "aggravated felony" offense under immigration law for which judges are not allowed to consider individual circumstances. Roland is automatically subject to mandatory deportation.

FACT

In the first six months of 2011, the federal government removed more than 46,000 mothers and fathers of U.S.-citizen children. Over 200,000 parents of U.S. citizen children have been deported since 2010. [4]

[1] In the Child's Best Interest? The Consequences of Losing a Lawful Immigrant Parent to Deportation, www.law.berkeley.edu/files/Human_Rights_Report.pdf [2] <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/us0409web.pdf> [3] <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/fssc06st.pdf> [4] <http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/us0409weg/pdf>; <http://act.colorlines.com/acton/attachment/1069/f-007/a/0/-/-/-/file.pdf>

