

Son reunited with mother after month of immigration custody

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LAS VEGAS (KSNV & MyNews3) -- The gaps of comprehensive immigration reform became a frightening reality for one Las Vegas valley family.

Bryan Rivera, 20, had to fight to keep his mother in the country after his abusive, estranged father turned her into authorities to avoid paying child support.

The family is now reunited thanks to U.S. Rep. Steven Horsford, D-Nev.

"She to me is the strongest person I have ever met," Rivera said.

"My mother to me is my world," Rivera says.

Rivera is a U.S. citizen, but his mother, Thelma Martinez Soto, is not. He says his father used that vulnerability when he found out he owed child support. He alerted authorities Soto's status and she spent nearly a month in immigration custody.

"I called him that morning. His remark was it's not my business, I don't care," Rivera said.

"It was the worst month of my life," Soto said.

Rivera shared his story with Rep Horsford on Monday, who is one of the original sponsors of the house immigration reform bill.

"Bryan's life is changed forever, but he also helped change my life," Horsford said.

After teetering on the brink of deportation, Soto was released on Tuesday.

"Because of a broken immigration system he almost lost his mother, he almost lost his home," Horsford said.

Soto is currently working with an immigration lawyer to get her U-Visa, which would grant her asylum.

As for other women in her situation, Horsford said the Violence Against Women Act was expanded last year to give protection to undocumented women.

http://www.mynews3.com/content/news/story/Son-reunited-with-mother-after-month-of/c0weULhJ_k-yOs1Fs5UnHg.csp