

U.S. leaders to be contacted concerning assistance for Trenton family of four

News

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U.S. Congressional and Senate offices are expected to be contacted again this week seeking assistance for a Trenton family. Ian and Ali Gray and their daughters Lauren and Gemma, moved to Trenton from England in 1995 via an Investor VISA to own and operate the Lakeview Restaurant and Motor Lodge. The VISA requires renewals.

Lauren, who was four years old when her family moved to Trenton, turns 21 years old on August 8th. At age 21, she no longer would qualify, under VISA rules, to reside in the U.S. as a dependent to her parents.

Ali Gray explained the family was approved for green card status in 2009 but still is on a waiting list to receive them under the immigration process. Green cards would qualify the family members for permanent residence. It also would allow Lauren and her younger sister, Gemma, to gain employment in this country, something they can't do now under U.S. law.

Mrs. Gray said efforts have been made in the past to seek assistance from the offices of Congressman Sam Graves and Senators Roy Blunt and Claire McCaskill, but those efforts were unsuccessful. However, with Lauren's 21st birthday approaching, another try is to be made.

After Ali's parents, Colin and Nora Withers of Trenton, became U.S. citizens, the Withers petitioned in 2003 for the Gray family to receive green cards. It took six years for the application to be approved in 2009. However, it is unknown when they will finally get their PERMANENT residency status. Mrs. Gray explained there are various categories people waiting for green cards are placed in, and there is a limit on the number issued each year.

Although assistance is being sought to allow Lauren Gray to legally stay in this country when she turns 21, Mrs. Gray explained that her daughter, even if she goes back to England, could qualify for a green card under the existing application until age 27:

[Click here to listen to Ali Gray](#)

Mrs. Gray said she doubts Lauren would be deported if she remains in the United States after she turns 21. However, the family says they "want to follow the rules" and "not jeopardize Lauren's opportunity to receive a green card after age 21":

[Click here to listen to Ali Gray](#)

Lauren Gray has a ticket to England at the end of this month (if necessary). In the meantime, she is continuing her efforts to LEGALLY remain in this country. She is seeking the public's support on an online petition calling for LEGAL immigrants (like her) to qualify for the Dream Act so she can stay in this country while she waits for her residency to be approved. The Dream Act currently only applies to ILLEGAL immigrants.

The online petition is at the website, www.change.org. Lauren said she wants to present the petition to members of the Senate and Congress, and perhaps even higher levels of government, if she receives enough signatures.

Here is PART TWO of an interview we did on Thursday, July 5th with Lauren, concerning her efforts to remain in the United States:

[Click here to listen to Lauren Gray](#)

Lauren Gray talks more about the online petition at the website, www.change.org:

[Click here to listen to Lauren Gray](#)

Miss Gray said she is HAPPY for those who benefit from the Dream Act:

[Click here to listen to Lauren Gray](#)

That is Lauren Gray of Trenton, who graduated this spring from Stephens College in Columbia with a Bachelor's degree in dance and a minor in integrated media.

Her parents, Ian and Ali Gray, are owners of the Lakeview Restaurants and Motor Lodge in Trenton, and employ about 30 U.S. citizens. The Gray's also are required to pay all taxes.