

Mexico Senate takes up migrant's cause

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MEXICO CITY --

A Mexican Senate committee passed a measure Wednesday urging President Felipe Calderon to send a diplomatic note to the United States protesting the deportation of an illegal migrant who took refuge in a Chicago church for a year.

The committee also approved a scholarship to help her 8-year-old U.S.-born son, Saul, who is an American citizen and stayed in the United States.

Elvira Arellano, 32, became an activist and a national symbol for illegal immigrant parents by defying her deportation order and speaking out from her sanctuary in the Adalberto United Methodist Church. She announced last week that she was leaving to try to lobby U.S. lawmakers for immigration reform.

On Sunday, shortly after she spoke at a rally in a Los Angeles church, she was arrested and deported to Tijuana, across the border from San Diego.

"We cannot remain quiet in view of this injustice and must ask for firm action from our authorities," Mexican Sen. Humberto Zazue said.

He accused the United States of violating international deportation accords by denying her access to the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles.

Arellano, who was at the committee's session, said Saul is in Chicago in the care of his godmother and will attend a Sept. 12 rally for immigration reform in Washington. She said she would help organize a rally in Tijuana that same day to demand Mexican authorities do more to protect migrants.

"For me it is very important that our government take a strong stand to defend all of us who decide to migrate to another country," she said.