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NCR-LA

From the front page »

» RUBIO continued from 1A

Documents show Rubio family's exit from Cuba

divisions between his parents, who came for economic reasons, and the Cubans who scrambled to leave their homeland but thought they could soon return. And the documents come to light amid new discrepancies since Rubio's time line came under scrutiny last week.

In a 2009 interview with NPR, then-Senate candidate Rubio explained his mother returned to Cuba in 1961 to care for her father, who had been injured in an accident. He said the family wanted to go home to Miami but were blocked by Castro's government for nine months, and that influenced their thinking about leaving for good.

In a widely read piece in *POLITICO* on Friday, Rubio did not mention the accident and said his family was making preparations to move to Cuba but "after just a few weeks, it became clear that the change happening in Cuba was not for the better. It was communism."

Rubio, 40 and Miami born, mentioned the accident in this week's interview and said he only recently got access to passports showing his family's travel.

The haziness he expressed from events decades ago was echoed by his older brother.

"It was one of those things where they really didn't share much information," said Mario Rubio, who is 61 and lives in Jacksonville. "Their whole life was trying to make a better life for us."

The Rubios filled out applications for immigrant visas and alien registration, not tourist visas. "That expresses an intention to remain indefinitely," said Joseph Reina, an immigration lawyer in Dallas.

Documents show Mr. Rubio was sponsored by his sister-in-law, who was already living in Miami and who signed an affidavit in 1956 stating the family was "desirous of entering the United States of America as permanent residents."

Reina and other experts said that puts the Rubios in a different context but cautioned it was not uncommon for immigrants to seek permanent residency while expecting to return home some day.

Mario Rubio was 29 when he filed for his visa; his wife was 25. They met in Havana. He was a security guard at a five-and-



Courtesy of Sen. Marco Rubio's office
Oriales and Mario Rubio. He died during his son's U.S. Senate campaign in 2010.



Mario Rubio, 61, brother of U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, lives in Jacksonville.



Sen. Marco Rubio, 40, was born in Miami 15 years after his parents arrived there.

dime; she was a cashier, according to the senator.

They were not politically active, Rubio said, which may discount one possible motivation for leaving. While Castro had not taken over, 1956 was a violent year in Havana with Fulgencio Batista's regime trying to quell the revolution.

"Certainly they felt at that time that they would have a better opportunity to pursue and accomplish their dreams here than they did there, for multiple reasons," Rubio said.

Some who left before Castro took over looked to his takeover, and their return.

"They were hopeful that this was a new beginning for Cuba, that things would get better and they were hoping maybe they can be part of that and made plans to do so," Rubio said, referring to several trips his parents took back to Cuba.

Rubio said his father held various jobs in Miami in the years after arriving but mostly was a bartender. His mother, he said, worked at one time in a factory that made aluminum chairs. Later, she worked at Kmart, a detail he worked into his political narrative.

For reasons unclear still, Rubio's parents waited until 1975

to become U.S. citizens. Experts say that was not uncommon.

On the petition for naturalization, Mr. Rubio, then working as a bartender at Sans Souci Hotel on Miami Beach, was asked if he was ever a member of the Communist Party. No, he wrote. At 9 a.m. on Nov. 5, 1975, he showed up for his hearing at Barry College Auditorium and left a citizen.

A few years later, Mr. Rubio moved the family to Las Vegas, where he tended bar at Sams Town Hotel, and his wife cleaned hotel rooms, according to the senator's biography. They returned to Miami in 1985.

Years later, the Rubios watched their son become the first Cuban-American speaker of the Florida House, then defy naysayers and run for U.S. Senate against a sitting governor. Mario Rubio, 83, died amid the campaign, but his wife was on stage on election night, a euphoric occasion that minted Rubio as a Republican star. (She recently suffered a stroke and is recovering.)

All along the way, Rubio talked eloquently of the Cuban exile experience — words that last week surfaced in a *Washington Post* article that said he embellished the facts. Rubio was forced to correct a Senate biography that said his parents came after Castro took over, but he angrily rebutted the suggestion he was deliberately misleading.

Miami's exile community rose to Rubio's defense amid questions about whether he was the son of exiles. But some wondered just how he could have gotten his facts so wrong. Every politically active, first-generation Cuban-American knows Castro officially overthrew the Batista regime on Jan. 1, 1959.

"I was pushed out for political reasons. His parents were pulled in for economic reasons. There's a major difference," said Miguel A. De La Torre, a professor at Iliff School of Theology in Denver who grew up in Miami and has studied exiles.

"Does it change the suffering that his parents could not go back? I think every Cuban has that as part of their history. I don't want to minimize that. But that he did not know when his parents came, I find that harder to understand."

Miami Herald staff writer Marc Caputo contributed to this report.

» VACCINE continued from 1A

Experts urge HPV vaccine for boys

after weighing increasing evidence of the vaccine's effectiveness in preventing rare but serious cancers in men. They also noted that immunizing boys would help to protect the girls who become their sexual partners, especially since many parents have been reluctant to vaccinate their daughters.

"The idea that we could prevent cancer with the vaccine was really motivating," said Dr. Anne Schuchat, director of the CDC's Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. She noted that the panel previously advised that boys may receive the HPV vaccine, but stopped short of the strong recommendation it had issued for girls.

"It was sort of like a footnote," she added. "Now it's going to be a routinely recommended vaccine."

Tuesday's action may intensify the debate over the Gardasil vaccine, which protects against four types of HPV known to cause most cervical cancers and genital warts. It's already controversial because many parents do not feel their young children need protection against sexually transmitted diseases. And it could be an even more delicate issue for parents of boys, since many of the HPV-related cancers in men result from gay sex.

Gardasil became an issue in the Republican presidential campaign, with some candidates criticizing Gov. Rick Perry of Texas for trying to require that girls in his state be vaccinated. And Rep. Michele Bachmann of Minnesota outraged many when she falsely suggested during a Tampa debate that the HPV vaccine causes mental retardation.

As of last year, fewer than half

of girls between the ages of 13 and 17 had received at least one HPV shot — and fewer than one-third had completed the recommended three doses. That low rate factored into the immunization's panel recommendation that boys get the vaccine.

"It's a delicate subject, because we have to approach sex at 11 or 12 years of age," said Dr. Philip Adler of HealthPoint Medical Group in Tampa's Westchase community. "This is something that mothers don't expect to talk about until their kids are 16 or 17."

A practicing pediatrician with more than 50 years' experience, Adler brings up the HPV vaccine carefully during children's routine seventh-grade visits. To the parents of boys, he explains the link to genital warts and penile, anal and oral cancers. Most are comfortable getting the vaccine after hearing him out, he said.

But some still don't get it because their insurance plans don't cover the HPV vaccine for boys. Nationally, the three-shot series can cost \$400 to \$600-plus.

"That's pretty darn expensive," said Dr. Juan Dumois, chairman of infectious diseases at All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg, who paid to immunize his 12- and 16-year-old sons. "We thought it was important enough to go ahead and give it."

Tuesday's recommendation should prompt more insurers to cover the immunization, Dumois noted. And it should address concerns about gender inequity that came up in the initial push to give the HPV vaccine to girls, without strong recommendations for boys, he said.

"I've heard complaints of why should the girls be immunized

Q&A

HPV vaccine

When should the vaccine be administered?

It is most effective if given before sexual activity begins and is commonly recommended for ages 11 and 12, though it can be given as early as age 9. Young women who weren't previously immunized should get it up to age 26; young men should get it up to age 21. (Among considerations in the age recommendations were cost-effectiveness data.)

Who made Tuesday's recommendations?

The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has 15 voting members who are doctors, nurses and public health experts in immunization. They were selected by federal health officials to develop recommendations for the vaccination of American children and adults.

if you are not immunizing the boys," he said, noting the virus is passed during sexual activity.

"Now I think the question is eliminated because the recommendation is to give it to all of them."

Information from Times wires was used in this report. Letitia Stein can be reached at lstein@sptimes.com or (813) 226-3322.