



## Domestic Violence Workers Watch Monserrate Trial Closely

[by Ailsa Chang](#)

NEW YORK, NY October 04, 2009 —The defense is expected to start presenting its case this week in the domestic violence trial of state senator Hiram Monserrate. Last week, alleged victim Karla Giraldo [hiraldo] testified her face was cut by accident. As WNYC's Ailsa Chang reports, domestic violence prevention advocates are watching the trial closely.

REPORTER: A doctor testified last week that Giraldo told her Monserrate slashed her face intentionally. But when Giraldo testified differently, many observers weren't surprised.

GARCIA-BIGELOW: Quite frankly I don't know why someone wouldn't recant.

REPORTER: Madeline Garcia-Bigelow directs the Domestic Violence Project at the Urban Justice Center. She says it's typical for domestic abuse victims to change their stories when their cases are prosecuted. Not only are you taking on someone you might fear, but you're making public something incredibly intimate. That can bring shame.

GARCIA-BIGELOW: It's often time safer to say it didn't happen and figure out another way out of the relationship.

REPORTER: After Giraldo's testimony last week, the defense says it may not need to bring any witnesses of its own.

Monserrate's trial resumes Tuesday.

For WNYC, I'm Ailsa Chang.