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6 **SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
7 **COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
8 **PROBATE DIVISION**

9 In the matter of: ) Case No.:  
10 )  
11 Maria Estefany GARCIA RUIZ, ) **DECLARATION OF MINOR IN**  
12 a Minor ) **SUPPORT OF REQUEST FOR ORDER**  
13 ) **ESTABLISHING MINOR'S ELIGIBILITY**  
14 ) **FOR SPECIAL IMMIGRANT JUVENILE**  
15 ) **STATUS**

16 I, Maria Estefany Garcia Ruiz, declare as follows:

- 17 1. I am thirteen years old. I was born in San Salvador, El Salvador. In El Salvador, I  
grew up with my aunt, my younger sister, and my cousin.
- 18 2. My mom's name is Maria Ruiz Figueroa.
- 19 3. My mom lived with us until I was five. She left on [REDACTED]. I remember  
20 that on that day I was playing with some friends. My mom was outside our house with her  
21 boyfriend, who was from Guatemala, and my younger sister. I wanted to go inside the house to play  
22 with my friend. The door was locked and my aunt had the keys. I told my mom that I was going to  
23 go to my aunt to ask for the keys. I went to where my aunt was to get the keys. We went back to

1 the house with my aunt, and my mom wasn't outside the house anymore. She and my sister were  
2 gone. At midnight, one of our neighbors arrived and said that she had my sister. My mom had left  
3 my sister with my neighbor.

4 4. A few days later, my mom called and said that she was going to come back. But she  
5 didn't come back.

6 5. About a week later, we were at my great-grandmother's house. My mom arrived at  
7 my great-grandmother's house to ask for the keys to our house so she could get her clothes. I wasn't  
8 allowed to see her. They gave her the keys, and she went to the house to get her clothes and her  
9 things. After that I didn't see her again. I never had a chance to say goodbye to her. She didn't  
10 leave a note or anything for me in the house. She didn't try to call me after she left.

11 6. I felt sad because my mom had gone away and she hadn't said anything to me.

12 7. I never talked to her again after that. She never sent me cards or presents for my  
13 birthday or for Christmas. She didn't send any money or anything to my aunt to help care for me. I  
14 think she has been living in Guatemala since she left.

15 8. My dad's name is Luis Garcia Sanchez.

16 9. I know who my dad is because my mom told me when she was still living with us in  
17 El Salvador. But I have never met my dad or talked to him. I saw him from far away a few times  
18 while I was living in El Salvador. He lived near my aunt's house. But he never tried to talk to me  
19 and he never sent my aunt or my mom money to take care of me. He never acted like a father  
20 towards me.

21 10. I feel bad because I didn't have a mom or a dad. It's difficult because I've never had  
22 the love of my parents.

23

1           11.     I came to the U.S. to have a better life here and because things weren't good with my  
2 aunt in El Salvador. She didn't like me going out because there were a lot of gangs in our  
3 neighborhood. She always wanted me to be inside the house. We would get into arguments and she  
4 would insult me. She would say things to make me feel bad, like that I was never going to be  
5 anyone and that I was nobody to her. It made me feel bad when she said these things because she  
6 was the only person that I had.

7           12.     I was also afraid of the gangs. My neighborhood was a red zone, which means that it  
8 was very dangerous. Sometimes at night they would stand right outside my house and smoke  
9 marijuana. At times they were outside my school. When they were by my school, I would walk  
10 home with my friends because I felt a little bit safer with my friends.

11          13.     I had to stop going to school in El Salvador after 7<sup>th</sup> grade because it was too  
12 expensive. I was not able to buy the uniform and school supplies to start 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

13          14.     I like living in the United States. I like being with my grandmother and my uncle, and  
14 there is less danger here. I can study and have a career here. I like going to school. Math is my  
15 favorite subject. I'd like to go to graduate high school and then go to a military school here in the  
16 United States. I'd also like to go to college. I don't think I could do this in El Salvador. There  
17 aren't many resources to do that in El Salvador.

18          15.     I ask that this Court allow me to apply to remain in the United States.

19  
20 I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing was read to me in my native language, Spanish,  
21 and that it is true and correct to the best of my ability.

22 Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

23 \_\_\_\_\_  
Maria Estefany Garcia Ruiz

1 I certify that I, \_\_\_\_\_, am fluent in the Spanish and English languages,  
2 and that I read the foregoing to Maria Estefany Garcia Ruiz in her native language, Spanish.

3 Executed this \_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, 2013, at East Palo Alto, California.

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
5 Signature