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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
WESTERN DIVISION

O.J.R.A., S.A.R., and J.A.R., Minors, By and Through Erica Santamaria, as Next Friend of Minors,

Petitioners,

v.

RUBY HERNANDEZ, Federal Field Specialist, Office of Refugee Resettlement; NIKY HYMEL, Federal Field Specialist Supervisor, Office of Refugee Resettlement; ANDREW GRADISON, Assistant Secretary of the Administration of Children and Families; ANGIE SALAZAR, Acting Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement; and ROBERT F. KENNEDY, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,

Respondents.

No. **2:26-cv-482**

Hon. André Birotte Jr.

PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF A GUARDIAN AD LITEM FOR PETITIONER S.A.R

FILED UNDER SEAL PURSUANT TO 79-5.2.2.(a)(i)

Pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 17(c)(2) and Local Rule 17-1, Petitioner S.A.R. ("minor Petitioner") hereby petitions for the appointment of a guardian ad litem in the instant action.

Minor Petitioner, by and through Next Friend Erica Santamaria ("Mrs. Santamaria"), respectfully states that:

1. Minor Petitioner is ten years old.

2. Minor Petitioner has filed a petition for a writ of habeas corpus against the abovenamed federal officials – Ruby Hernandez, Federal Field Specialist, Office of Refugee Resettlement; Niky Hymel, Federal Field Specialist Supervisor, Office of Refugee Resettlement; Andrew Gradison, Assistant Secretary of the Administration for Children and Families; Angie Salazar, Acting Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement; and Robert F. Kennedy, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – arising from his unlawful detention in violation of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) and his procedural and substantive due process rights under the Fifth Amendment.

3. Minor Petitioner is represented in this matter pro bono and appears through Next Friend Mrs. Santamaria. Pursuant to Fed. R. Civ. P. 17(c)(2), "[t]he court must appoint a guardian ad litem – or issue another appropriate order – to protect a minor or incompetent person who is unrepresented in an action." Because Minor Petitioner is represented by counsel and appearing via Next Friend, an application for appointment of a guardian ad litem was not filed at the time of the initial appearance, as would otherwise be required under Local Rule 171.

4. No previous petition for appointment of a guardian ad litem has been filed in this matter.

5. Mrs. Santamaria resides in Riverside, California, and is a Program Manager on the Detained Youth Empowerment Project at Immigrant Defenders

Law Center. Mrs. Santamaria is not an attorney.

6. Mrs. Santamaria is a competent and responsible person who is dedicated to acting in Minor Petitioner's best interests in this matter.

7. Mrs. Santamaria certifies that she has no interests adverse to Minor Petitioner.

8. Mrs. Santamaria is willing to act as guardian ad litem in this matter.

WHEREFORE, Minor Petitioner respectfully requests that this Court appoint Erica Santamaria as guardian ad litem for minor S.A.R. in this matter.

Dated: 01/28/2026

/s/ S.A.R.
Petitioner S.A.R.

Dated: 01/28/2026

By: */s/Emily Gerber Sugarman*
Emily Gerber Sugarman
Pro Bono Counsel for Petitioners

CONSENT OF APPOINTMENT

I, Erica Santamaria, hereby consent to act as guardian ad litem for Minor-Petitioner in this action.

Dated: 01/28/2026



Erica Santamaria