

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK**

A.C.R., J.G.V., E.A.R., C.V.R., Y.A.M., B.R.C.,
J.C.B., L.M.R., and S.M.M., on behalf of
themselves and all others similarly situated;
CENTRAL AMERICAN REFUGEE CENTER
(CARECEN-NY); and CENTRO LEGAL DE LA
RAZA,

Plaintiffs,

v.

KRISTI NOEM, Secretary, U.S. Department of
Homeland Security (official capacity); UNITED
STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND
SECURITY; JOSEPH EDLOW, Director, United
States Citizenship and Immigration Services
(official capacity); UNITED STATES
CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION
SERVICES; and ROSE KENDRICK, Acting
Director, United States Citizenship and
Immigration Services National Benefits Center
(official capacity),

Defendants.

**REPLY MEMORANDUM OF LAW IN
SUPPORT OF INDIVIDUAL
PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR CLASS
CERTIFICATION**

Civ. Action No. 1:25-cv-03962-EK-TAM

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INTRODUCTION

Defendants’ opposition misstates facts; misapplies Article III standing and Rule 23 certification requirements; and ignores binding precedent. Inescapably, this class action lawsuit challenges the legality of the process by which Defendants rescinded the SIJS Deferred Action Policy,¹ not individual determinations on SIJS deferred action and EADs. The Rescission Policy impacts the Individual Plaintiffs and putative class members in the same ways: by cutting off a source of protection from deportation and work permit eligibility, thereby exposing them to a heightened risk of deportation, detention, and loss of work authorization, among other harms. Defendants try to distract from these harms by pointing out that deferred action is separately available to all noncitizens; but they are referring to rarely-granted relief for specified “compelling” reasons, such as a family member’s military service or a need for access to medical treatment in the United States. That is not the policy at issue in this case, and no amount of deflection can overcome the voluminous and unrebutted record demonstrating that Plaintiffs have suffered concrete harms that are fairly traceable to the Rescission Policy and can be redressed through the Policy’s vacatur. Moreover, the carefully tailored classes are subject to and challenge a unitary policy, satisfying Rule 23’s requirements. As there are no jurisdictional bars precluding classwide relief, this Court should certify the proposed classes.

REPLY ARGUMENT

I. PLAINTIFFS SATISFY ARTICLE III’S STANDING REQUIREMENTS.

Defendants do not even attempt to rebut the myriad harms arising from the Rescission Policy as described in declarations from Plaintiffs, legal service providers, researchers, and other

¹ Plaintiffs incorporate the naming conventions used in their opening brief and add the following abbreviations: “CC Br.” refers to Plaintiffs’ Memorandum of Law in Support of Motion for Class Certification, Dkt. 7; “CC Opp.” refers to Defendants’ Memorandum of Law in Opposition to Motion for Class Certification, Dkt. 43; and “PI Reply” refers to Plaintiffs’ Reply Memorandum of Law in Support of Motion for Preliminary Injunction (contemporaneously filed with this Brief).

experts. Instead, Defendants’ opposition is based on the false framing that the Plaintiffs’ injury is their lack of deferred action and EADs. But Plaintiffs’ claims arise out of a violation of their *procedural* rights stemming from Defendants’ unlawful rescission of the SIJS Deferred Action Policy, and their injury is the lost opportunity to be considered for or to renew deferred action and an EAD, which results in a “risk of real harm.” *Spokeo, Inc. v. Robins*, 578 U.S. 330, 341 (2016).

A. Plaintiffs’ Injuries Are Concrete, Not Speculative or Hypothetical.²

To enforce their procedural rights, plaintiffs must first establish that the procedures “are designed to protect some threatened concrete interest of [theirs] that is the ultimate basis of [their] standing.” *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife*, 504 U.S. 555, 573 n.8 (1992). Defendants wrongly assert that “[a]n alien has no legally protected interest in a discretionary-immigration determination.” CC Opp. at 7. It is well-settled that loss of opportunity to pursue an immigration benefit—even a discretionary one—is a “concrete interest” sufficient to satisfy the injury-in-fact requirement. *See Mantena v. Johnson*, 809 F.3d 721, 731 (2d Cir. 2015) (“[E]ven if USCIS ultimately decides not to grant [the plaintiff] a green card, the ‘lost opportunity is itself a concrete injury.’” (quotation omitted)); *CC Distribs., Inc. v. United States*, 883 F.2d 146, 150 (D.C. Cir. 1989) (“[A] plaintiff suffers a constitutionally cognizable injury by the loss of an opportunity to pursue a benefit . . . even though the plaintiff may not be able to show that it was certain to receive that benefit had it been accorded the lost opportunity.” (emphases removed)); *De Sousa v. Dir. of U.S. Citizenship & Immigr. Servs.*, 720 F. Supp. 3d 794, 801–02 (N.D. Cal. 2024) (same).

The cases Defendants rely upon are inapposite because they do not address whether *the loss of an opportunity* to apply for an immigration benefit is sufficient for Article III standing;

² Contrary to Defendants’ assertion (CC Opp. at 6–7), putative class members are not required to submit evidence of standing. *See Cent. States Se. & Sw. Areas Health & Welfare Fund v. Merck-Medco Managed Care, L.L.C.*, 504 F.3d 229, 241 (2d Cir. 2007) (“only one of the named Plaintiffs is required to establish standing in order to seek relief on behalf of the entire class.”)

rather, those cases involve constitutional challenges to the *denial* of an immigration benefit and address whether there was a “legitimate entitlement” sufficient to support the due process claims—a fundamentally different inquiry than a “concrete interest” for purposes of standing. *See* CC Opp. at 7–8 (citing *Mendez-Garcia v. Lynch*, 840 F.3d 655, 665 (9th Cir. 2016) (analyzing whether plaintiff had a due process right to be granted cancellation of removal); *Dave v. Ashcroft*, 363 F.3d 649, 653 (7th Cir. 2004) (same); *Smith v. Ashcroft*, 295 F.3d 425, 430 (4th Cir. 2002) (analyzing whether plaintiff had a due process right to a discretionary waiver of deportation)).

Nor must Plaintiffs “have a final order of removal that could result in their imminent detention and removal from the United States” to show injury. CC Opp. at 5. Courts routinely adjudicate APA challenges to unlawful changes in immigration policy where the plaintiffs face an increased risk of deportation. *See, e.g., Batalla Vidal v. Duke*, 295 F. Supp. 3d 127, 156 (E.D.N.Y. 2017) (plaintiffs had standing “to challenge the process by which defendants decided to end the DACA program”). Here, each Plaintiff faces a non-hypothetical and substantial risk of deportation and detention due to their lack of access to initial or renewed deferred action. *See* Prandini Decl., Dkt. 9-12, ¶¶ 23–34 (explaining how the loss of access to deferred action harms SIJS beneficiaries who have final removal orders, who are in pending removal proceedings, or who are not currently in removal proceedings). The opportunity to be considered for deferred action is particularly important in the present climate as Defendants have stated that Plaintiffs and class members are subject to deportation, enacted policies to expeditiously deport those deemed removable, and have in fact commenced removal proceedings against SIJS beneficiaries and, in some cases, deported them. *See id.* ¶ 32; Castillos Granados Decl., Dkt. 9-14, ¶ 28³; *see also* PI Reply at 13.

³ While Plaintiffs dispute that SIJS beneficiaries are generally removable while they wait for a chance to become LPRs, *see* Compl. ¶ 46 n.31, Defendants have unequivocally expressed their plan to take immigration enforcement actions against individuals without “lawful status,” including SIJS beneficiaries. *See* Ex. E to Masetta-Alvarez Decl., June 6, 2025 Memo (“June 6 Internal Memo”), Dkt. 42-5, at 2 (“Aliens with an approved SIJ petition remain subject

Plaintiffs face similar harms from the denial of access to EADs, regardless of whether they are of working age. Preliminarily, as alleged in the Complaint⁴, USCIS’s June 6 Policy Alert expressly states that USCIS will no longer adjudicate (c)(14) EAD applications from SIJS beneficiaries. While Defendants try to retract this clearly unlawful policy via declaration, (*see* PI Br. at 10) this change has been confirmed by legal service providers who report that they stopped receiving (c)(14) EAD approvals for SIJS beneficiaries after April 7th. *See* Castillo-Granados Decl. ¶ 23. Beyond facilitating financial independence and stability, EADs act as a form of government-issued identification and provide access to opportunities such as higher education, housing, medical care, and bank accounts. PI Reply at 7 (incorporating record cites regarding harms from loss of EADs). The 2022 Policy recognized this broader purpose by exempting youth with SIJS from the obligation to show economic necessity to obtain EADs. *See id.*; Compl. ¶¶ 68, 90.

Plaintiffs also suffer emotional injuries such as severe distress, anxiety, and the inability to plan for their futures, posed by either the inability to apply for deferred action or an EAD, or due to the looming threat of their deferred action expiring without the opportunity to seek renewal. *See* CC Br. at 12–13 (describing harms to Individual Plaintiffs); PI Reply at 11–12.

B. Plaintiffs’ Injuries Are Causally Connected to the Rescission of the Deferred Action Policy and Likely to Be Redressed by a Favorable Decision.

Plaintiffs’ inability to apply for deferred action or an EAD is a lost opportunity “fairly traceable” to the rescission of the SIJS Deferred Action Policy. *Spokeo*, 578 U.S. at 338. The

to removal for lack of lawful status”); *id.* at 7 (stating that granting deferred action to SIJS beneficiaries is “entirely contrary to recent EOs”); Executive Order 14165, *Securing our Borders*, 90 FR 8467 (Jan. 20, 2025), §2(d) (announcing a policy to secure the borders by “[r]emoving promptly all aliens who enter or remain in violation of Federal law”); Executive Order 14159, *Protecting the American People Against Invasion*, 90 FR 8443 (Jan. 20, 2025), § 3 (directing departments and agencies to “employ all lawful means to ensure the faithful execution of the immigration laws of the United States against all inadmissible and removable aliens.”).

⁴ When deciding a motion for class certification, courts must treat as true all allegations contained in the complaint.” *Fox v. Cheminova, Inc.*, 213 F.R.D. 113, 121 (E.D.N.Y. 2003) (internal quotation omitted).

Government's position that Plaintiffs' harms stem solely from their immigration status is nonsensical. Here, Plaintiffs are undoubtedly in a more precarious position than they were before the Rescission Policy with respect to their exposure to and risk of detention, deportation, and disqualification for work authorization. If the SIJS Deferred Action Policy had not been unlawfully rescinded, USCIS would be considering the Plaintiffs and the class members they represent for deferred action (and renewals) and EADs. Moreover, despite SIJS deferred action having had a 99% approval rate, redressability does not require Plaintiffs to demonstrate that they would obtain a grant of deferred action or an approved EAD. *See Mantena*, 809 F.3d at 731 (“[E]ven if USCIS ultimately decides not to grant Mantena a green card, the ‘lost opportunity’ is itself a concrete injury-and a favorable decision would redress it.”); *Shalom Pentecostal Church v. Acting Sec’y U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Sec.*, 783 F.3d 156, 161–62 (3d Cir. 2015) (same).

II. THIS COURT SHOULD CERTIFY THE PROPOSED CLASSES.

This Court should reject the Government's suggestion that a decision on class certification can be delayed until after a ruling on its intended motion to dismiss. *See* CC Opp. at 2 n.1. Tens of thousands of SIJS beneficiaries across the country are being harmed by the Rescission Policy, and a class action is the proper vehicle for ensuring meaningful and widespread relief and notice for those harmed. *Trump v. CASA, Inc.*, 145 S. Ct. 2540, 2555–56 (2025). Certification should occur “at an early practicable time after the commencement of the lawsuit,” Fed. R. Civ. P. 23(c)(1)(A), and Defendants do not dispute that the Court has a robust and sufficient record to apply Rule 23. Defendants' concerns about the Court's ability to order relief under 8 U.S.C. § 1252(f)(1) are without merit (*see infra* and PI Reply at 3–4), and such jurisdictional questions “can be resolved on a classwide basis with a single legal determination, underscoring the appropriateness of class certification.” *Kidd v. Mayorkas*, 343 F.R.D. 428, 442 (C.D. Cal. 2023).

Moreover, Defendants' Rule 23 analysis is fundamentally flawed, as they contort the

commonality, typicality, and Rule 23(b)(2) inquiries by conflating and contrasting the facts, claims, and requested relief of representatives of *different* classes. *See* CC Opp. at 12–13, 17. This fallacious approach ignores that class action lawsuits often involve multiple classes or subclasses reflecting that the same unlawful acts may unleash a range of harms, and courts are required to independently examine each proposed class/subclass to determine whether it satisfies Rule 23. *See Zivkovic v. Laura Christy LLC*, 329 F.R.D. 61, 68 (S.D.N.Y. 2018); Fed R. Civ. P. 23(c)(5).

A. Plaintiffs’ Proposed Classes Each Satisfy Rule 23(a).⁵

1. The Deferred Action Class. Where, as here, “a movant ‘seeks to enjoin a practice or policy, rather than individualized relief, commonality is assumed.’” *Batalla Vidal v. Wolf*, 501 F. Supp. 3d 117, 135 (E.D.N.Y. 2020) (quotation omitted). The supposed “dissimilarities” Defendants point to do not “impede the generation of common answers.” *Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. v. Dukes*, 564 U.S. 338, 350 (2011).

First, the fact that A.C.R. and J.G.V. filed Form G-325A requests for deferred action has no legal relevance for the typicality inquiry or the class’s APA claims. Their requests have not been adjudicated, nor to Plaintiffs’ knowledge have any similar requests made by other putative class members. *See* Castillo-Granados Decl. ¶ 23. A.C.R. and J.G.V. submitted their forms after Defendants silently rescinded the 2022 Policy, and A.C.R. and J.G.V. requested deferred action based solely on SIJS—grounds that no longer exist due to the Rescission Policy.⁶ A.C.R. and

⁵ Defendants do not challenge the Rule 23(a)(1) numerosity requirement. *See* CC Opp. at 10. While Defendants assert that “Plaintiffs fail to show that their proposed classes meet the . . . adequacy . . . requirement[.],” they never make that argument in their brief and have abandoned it. *See Zhang v. Gonzales*, 426 F.3d 540, 541 n.1 (2d Cir. 2005) (an argument is “abandoned” where a party “fail[s] to discuss [the] claim anywhere in [its] brief”).

⁶ *See* Declaration of Will Sheehan ¶¶ 3–4 & Ex. A; Declaration of Nicholas Garcés ¶¶ 3–4 & Ex. A. A.C.R. and J.G.V.’s forms clearly state that they sought deferred action based on their approved SIJ status and not on any other ground. Notably, on May 29, 2005, USCIS submitted for public comment a proposal to change Form G-325A by eliminating Special Immigrant Juvenile Status as a ground for deferred action—a proposal that further implements the Rescission Policy. *See* 90 Fed. Reg. 22752 (May 29, 2025) and associated table of changes to the form, available at:

J.G.V. satisfy typicality because they suffered the same injury as the class (they did not receive a deferred action adjudication) and seek the same relief (vacatur of the Rescission Policy and an opportunity to be considered for deferred action under the 2022 Policy). More generally, Defendants misleadingly point to Form G-325A as purported evidence of the continuing availability of deferred action. *See* CC Opp. at 14 (stating that post June 6, 2025, SIJS beneficiaries could apply for DA under the “current criteria” and therefore “may not have an injury” or be “entitled to a remedy at all.”). However, the “current criteria” are those governing deferred action to any noncitizens in cases the DHS Secretary deems sufficiently “compelling,” Dkt. 42-5, June 6 Internal Memo at 4, which requires certain circumstances not relevant to most SIJS beneficiaries, such as a family member’s military service or a documented need for medical treatment in the United States, *see* <https://www.uscis.gov/g-325a> (under Special Instructions). This is not interchangeable with the SIJS Deferred Action Policy. The Rescission Policy did more than merely eliminate automatic consideration of deferred action without the need to file a form; it retracted the policy of weighing an approved SIJS petition (coupled with being subject to the visa backlog) as a “particularly strong positive factor that weighs heavily in favor of granting deferred action,” Dkt. 9-26, 2022 USCIS Pol’y Man. vol. 6 pt. J ch. 4.G.2. Defendants cannot simply ignore the harms that the putative classes face due to the Rescission Policy itself – the lost opportunity to apply for *deferred action based on a grant of SIJS*.

Second, Defendants’ attempt to truncate the class to include only those granted SIJS as of June 5, 2025, has no basis in law or fact. While the agency’s failure to consider general reliance interests is one reason that a policy change may be arbitrary and capricious under the APA, *see*

<https://www.regulations.gov/document/USCIS-2005-0024-0075>; *id.* at 3 (reflecting deletion of SIJS as a “filing type for your deferred action request”).

FCC v. Fox Television Stations, Inc., 556 U.S. 502, 515 (2009), plaintiffs bringing an APA suit need not prove that they personally relied on the prior policy to establish unlawful agency action. In short, individual reliance is not an element of Plaintiffs’ APA claims. Moreover, June 5th is an arbitrary date for assessing reliance, and any such differences among class members would not defeat class certification given the nature of the claim. *See Barrows v. Becerra*, 24 F.4th 116, 131–32 (2d Cir. 2022) (finding that commonality and typicality were both satisfied, despite differences in how injury manifested amongst class members, because plaintiffs sought to invalidate agency policy). Indeed, Defendants’ proposed date shift does nothing to address the unlawful process that produced the Rescission Policy, a harm common to all class members irrespective of the timing of their approvals. The only purpose served by Defendants’ proposed modification to the Deferred Action Class definition (*see* CC Opp. at 21) would be to deny hundreds of current and future SIJS beneficiaries access to classwide notice and relief, even though “persons who might be injured in the future are includable in the class.” *Lewis v. Gross*, 663 F. Supp. 1164, 1169 (E.D.N.Y. 1986), *on reconsideration sub nom. Lewis v. Grinker*, 660 F. Supp. 169 (E.D.N.Y. 1987).

Plaintiffs acknowledge, however, that Defendants have identified a subclass within the Deferred Action class, as relief under Count III (Compl. ¶¶ 138–44) would not apply to SIJS approvals granted after June 5, 2025. CC Opp. at 14. Plaintiffs therefore respectfully ask this Court, pursuant to Rule 23(c)(5), to also certify the following Subclass of the Deferred Action Class:

Accardi Subclass: *All individuals whose SIJS petitions were approved on or after April 7, 2025 and on or before June 5, 2025, and who were not considered for deferred action based on SIJS because of Defendants’ sub silentio April 7, 2025 rescission of the 2022 Policy.*

Plaintiffs A.C.R., J.G.V., E.A.R., and C.V.R. can serve as class representatives.

2. **The Renewal Class.** Defendants’ complaints about the Renewal Class are likewise unfounded. The class’s claims are not “too speculative to be cognizable,” CC Opp. at 11,

as they have a legally protected interest in having an opportunity and process to renew deferred action. *See supra* at 2–4; PI Reply at 11–14. Defendants’ proposal to limit this class to SIJS beneficiaries “who have no other pathway to lawful immigration status or protection from removal” is untenable. CC Opp. at 21. As an initial matter, such a class is not ascertainable because such individuals are not “readily identifiable.” *In re Petrobras Sec.*, 862 F.3d 250, 269 (2d Cir. 2017). Moreover, class members subject to and harmed by the Rescission Policy do not lose their right to challenge unlawful policy changes under the APA just because some other path towards immigration relief—which may be transient or provide different benefits or protections—may exist. This “no other pathway” rule was not a limitation to eligibility under the 2022 Policy and Defendants cannot create such a limitation out of thin air for the sole purpose of curtailing class members’ ability to enforce their legally protected interest.⁷

Further, Defendants misread the proposed class definition to include SIJS beneficiaries who “have already applied for adjustment of status and who already have lawful permanent resident status.” CC Opp. at 11. The proposed class includes a limitation clearly stating that it only applies to individuals “who are no longer eligible to renew their deferred action *while they await a visa.*” CC Br. at 2 (emphasis added). This carefully crafted language excludes the lucky few who will obtain a visa before their deferred action expires and can apply for lawful permanent residence.

3. EAD Subclass. Defendants’ arguments with respect to typicality evince a misunderstanding of how EADs function. The document has a far broader purpose than just work authorization—it provides a form of government-issued identification, as well as access to Social Security numbers, bank accounts, and driver’s licenses. *See supra* at 4. Defendants propose to limit this class to SIJS beneficiaries who “have manifested interest in employment authorization and

⁷ Plaintiffs do not need to show that every class member would have standing. *See supra* n. 2.

have no other current means of obtaining” it. CC Opp. at 22. Similar to the renewal class, Defendants are creating another ascertainability issue and looking to impose criteria for eligibility for an EAD that did not exist under the 2022 Policy or 8 C.F.R. § 274a.12(c)(14). Likewise, eligibility for and interest in obtaining employment authorization are not static. The chance to seek employment authorization through SIJS should not depend on ruling out any alternative means.

B. Plaintiffs’ Proposed Classes Each Satisfy Rule 23(b)(2).

Plaintiffs’ harms can be remedied by a declaration that the rescission of the SIJS Deferred Action Policy was unlawful, and by an injunction requiring Defendants to set aside the new policy. 8 U.S.C. § 1252(f)(1) does not deprive this Court of jurisdiction over Plaintiffs’ claims, *see* PI Reply 3–4, but even if it did, class-wide *declaratory* relief remains available and therefore, certification under Rule 23(b)(2) is appropriate. Every Court of Appeals to decide this question, along with numerous district courts, have held that classwide declaratory relief remains available even for provisions covered by § 1252(f)(1).⁸ *See, e.g., Al Otro Lado v. Exec. Off. for Immigr. Rev.*, 138 F.4th 1102, 1124 (9th Cir. 2025), *petition for cert. filed*, No. 25-5 (July 1, 2025); *Brito v. Garland*, 22 F.4th 240, 252 (1st Cir. 2021); *Make the Rd. N.Y. v. Wolf*, 962 F.3d 612, 635 (D.C. Cir. 2020); *Alli v. Decker*, 650 F.3d 1007, 1016 (3d Cir. 2011). Indeed, the plain text of the statute mandates this result. *Compare* 8 U.S.C. § 1252(f) (entitled “Limit on injunctive relief”) *with id.* § 1252(e)(1)(A) (“[N]o court may enter declaratory, injunctive, or other equitable relief[.]”).

CONCLUSION

Plaintiffs respectfully request that this Court grant this Motion for class certification.

⁸ The single case Defendants cite supporting their argument that class certification is inappropriate for declaratory relief concerning § 1252(f)(1)’s covered provisions, *Onosamba-Ohindo v. Searls*, 678 F. Supp. 3d 364, 371–72 (W.D.N.Y. 2023), is inapposite here, where Plaintiffs also seek non-injunctive relief in the form of APA vacatur. That relief ensures that any declaratory relief in this case would “chang[e] the government’s behavior,” *id.* at 372, making certification of the classes entirely appropriate.

Dated: August 22, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ John Magliery

Natalie J. Kraner, No. 4441598
Alexander Shalom
Catherine Weiss (*pro hac vice*)
Markiana Julceus
Noemi Schor (*pro hac vice*)
LOWENSTEIN SANDLER LLP
1251 Avenue of the Americas, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10020
212.262.6700
nkraner@lowenstein.com
ashalom@lowenstein.com
cweiss@lowenstein.com
mjulceus@lowenstein.com
nschor@lowenstein.com

Stephanie E. Norton, No. 5205539*
Rachel Leya Davidson**
Yulie Landan (*pro hac vice*)***
NATIONAL IMMIGRATION PROJECT
1763 Columbia Road NW
Suite 175 #896645
Washington, DC 20009
202.217.4742
ellie@nipnlg.org
rachel@nipnlg.org
yulie@nipnlg.org

Rebecca Scholtz (*pro hac vice*)
NATIONAL IMMIGRATION PROJECT
30 S. 10th St. (c/o Univ. of
St. Thomas Legal Services Clinic)
Minneapolis, MN 55403
202.742.4423
rebecca@nipnlg.org

Brad Miller (*pro hac vice* forthcoming)
Adam Sieff (*pro hac vice* forthcoming)
Zoë McKinney (*pro hac vice*)
Joseph Elie-Meyers (*pro hac vice*)
AK Shee (*pro hac vice* forthcoming)
Monica E. Gibbons (*pro hac vice*
forthcoming)
DAVIS WRIGHT TREMAINE LLP
350 South Grand Avenue, 27th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90071
213.633-6800
bradmiller@dwt.com
adamsieff@dwt.com
zoemckinney@dwt.com
josepheliemeyers@dwt.com
akshee@dwt.com
monicagibbons@dwt.com

John Magliery, No. 60082
DAVIS WRIGHT TREMAINE LLP
1251 6th Avenue, 21st Floor
New York, NY 10020
212.489-8230
johnmagliery@dwt.com

Rebecca Brown (*pro hac vice*)
PUBLIC COUNSEL
610 S. Ardmore Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90005
213.385.2977
rbrown@publiccounsel.org

*Attorneys for Plaintiffs A.C.R., J.G.V., E.A.R.,
C.V.R., Y.A.M., B.R.C., J.C.B., L.M.R., and
S.M.M., Central American Refugee Center
(CARECEN-NY), and Centro Legal de la
Raza*

Wendy Wylegala, No. 4154621
KIDS IN NEED OF DEFENSE (KIND)
252 West 37th Street, Floor 15
New York, NY 10018
646-970-2913
wwylegala@supportkind.org

*Not admitted in DC; working remotely from Wyoming and admitted in New York only.

**Not admitted in DC; admitted in New York only.

***Not admitted in DC; working remotely from New York and admitted in California only.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on the 22nd day of August 2025, I electronically filed the foregoing Reply Memorandum of Law in Support of Individual Plaintiffs' Motion for Class Certification using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to all counsel of record. This document was filed electronically and is available for viewing and downloading from the ECF system.

/s/ John Magliery