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Firm Assists in Reuniting Separated Immigrant Family

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March 27, 2019 — A pro bono team in the firm's D.C. office paved the way for a Honduran mother to reunite with her 6-year-old son after securing her release from immigration detention on bond.

The client and her son came to the U.S. in May 2018, fleeing death threats from gangs in Honduras. The client's husband and two older sons had already fled the country after the gangs killed her brothers-in-law.

The client and her son were apprehended after crossing the Rio Grande, and immediately separated as part of the current administration's "zero tolerance" policy. A federal judge in California denounced the policy, issuing a preliminary injunction last June that blocked most family separations at the U.S.-Mexico border and ordered that children already separated from their parents at the border be located and reunited.

The client's son was released to his father in Florida; however, the client remained in detention in Tacoma, Wash. The Immigration Justice Campaign referred the case to the firm's D.C. office.

Tabitha Bartholomew argued the first bond hearing via telephonic appearance in July before Tacoma Immigration Court Judge John Odell, who denied the motion for release on bond. Bartholomew filed an appeal on the client's behalf to the Board of Immigration Appeals (the BIA), arguing in part that the immigration judge erred in failing to consider the effect of the client's extended separation from her young child in rendering his decision to deny bond.

On Dec. 26, the BIA granted HHR's appeal and issued an order that the case be remanded to determine the appropriate amount of bond. Carolyn Jackson reargued the case via telephonic appearance on Jan. 30 before Judge Odell, who granted bond for \$15,000.

The Bond Project and the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, which is representing the client in her petition for asylum, raised both the required amount of bond and airfare that same day, and flew the client to Florida, where she and her son were reunited the next day.

Bartholomew and Jackson worked on this matter under the supervision of HHR partners Hagit Elul and Jim Boykin.

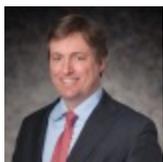
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