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Statement of Attorney Gloria Allred

Today we are here in New York City with Danielle Hazel to announce our legal challenge to the longstanding rule of the Miss America pageant and the Miss World beauty pageants which exclude mothers with children from being eligible to compete, simply because they have a child.

The Miss World eligibility requirement states that to be eligible for this pageant, a woman must be, “unmarried, have no children, and not pregnant.”

The Miss America eligibility requirement states that a person must have, “no legal dependents.”

We believe that these eligibility requirements discriminate against women who are parents in violation of the law in New York state and in particular in violation of the New York City ordinance which prohibits sex discrimination.

Our client, Danielle Hazel, wanted to apply to enter both the Miss America and Miss World beauty pageants. When she read the eligibility requirements for both pageants, however, she realized that because she is the mother of a six-year-old child, she would not be eligible to compete simply because she has a child who is legally dependent on her.

Danielle felt that it was and is wrong to discriminate against mothers with children and she contacted me to determine if she could right this wrong which discriminates against her and other mothers in New York City.

We agreed to represent her and today she FedExed her claim of discrimination to the City of New York Commission on Human Rights.

We are seeking an end to the discriminatory requirement of both pageants which we believe denies and excludes Danielle and other mothers from an

important business and cultural opportunity simply because of their status as parents.

As we stated in Danielle's filed complaint, this exclusion is degrading to Danielle as "it is based upon the antiquated stereotype that women cannot be both a mother and be beautiful, poised, passionate, talented, and philanthropic."

My law firm and I were successful previously when we challenged a similar Miss Universe role for Andrea Quiroga, a California woman who was a parent and therefore not eligible for entry for Miss California.

We are very proud of Danielle, who has decided to file her complaint in New York to end the facially discriminatory eligibility requirement of the Miss America and Miss World pageants which have a structure that recruits applicants from New York but denies eligibility to New York residents simply because they are parents who have legal dependents.

Being pregnant or being a parent is not a crime, and should not exclude an individual from employment or business opportunities.

An individual's status as a parent should not carry a stigma and no person should have to feel embarrassed, humiliated, or degraded because they have become a parent.

Today we are pleased to have with us, the leader of the international "Right to be a Mother" campaign. Veronika Didusenko won the title of Miss Ukraine in 2018. Miss Ukraine is part of the Miss World pageant. However, after Veronika was crowned, her crown was taken away from her simply because the pageant learned that she had a child.

Veronika has been waging her own legal battle in Ukraine against this discrimination and we are honored that she has joined us today to support Danielle in her legal challenge in New York.

We have chosen to hold this press conference in front of the Women's Rights Pioneers monument in Central Park to announce our new legal battle to advance and vindicate women's rights. Our efforts continue the battle of our

foremothers to improve the status and condition of women and win the equal rights, respect, and dignity, which women should be entitled to enjoy in all aspects of American life and in every country in the world.

Gloria Allred

Attorney at Law

Representing Danielle Hazel

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