

**DECLARATION OF ANGELINA DÍAZ RODRÍGUEZ IN SUPPORT OF HER  
APPLICATIONS I-360, AOS AND I-601**

I, Angelina Díaz Rodríguez hereby swear and affirm that the following declaration is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

1. My name is Angelina Díaz Rodríguez. I was born in Tijuana, Mexico on November 15, 1979. I was raised in a torn household which was very difficult for my mother and all of her children including me.
2. My father was an alcoholic. His condition used to trigger some form of abuse whenever he used to come home drunk. My father used to beat my mother at times if there was no food to feed him or she refused to get intimate with him. This was his daily routine!
3. One day, I tried to save my mother from his physical torture because he grabbed her hair and banged her face into the wall leaving her bleeding on the floor. I rushed out of from under the bed; because I used to hide myself every time he used to come home, to have a look at her and that's when he beat me for helping her and abused me verbally as well while drunk that I am useless and worthless and I will end up like my mother.
4. As a merely six year old, it was a lot to take for me. I wasn't able to understand my feelings. I know I was scared for sure. But when I grew older, I understood that that feeling was hate. I always hated my father for mistreating my mother and I both.
5. Soon after all this, my mother decided to walk out from this abusive marriage. We left our father and started living with my grandmother. I used to feel lonely and scared there also. I and my siblings used to go to school but it wasn't safe outside.
6. I was a victim of first-hand abuse at home by my father and second-hand abuse by the criminal activity that was a norm in the area where we used to live. I never felt safe anywhere. There was always this feeling of fear and anxiousness inside of me which made me very silent as a kid.
7. After all this, I further faced another trauma. This was when I turned ten years old. My mother decided to walk out of my life. She left me one night sleeping at my grandmother's house, only to wake up and see her no more around me. I had many questions but I was too scared to ask them. Later on, I found out that she had gone to come here – the United States.
8. I grew up alone without her. The time when a daughter needs her mother the most was the time when I had no one around me. My mother came back in life when I turned fifteen. Although I was happy to see her but I was very angry at her for leaving me like that. As I never got any form of protection from my

parents, I was mostly on my own. Even now when I think of that time, I end up crying.

9. Soon after when I turned eighteen, I looked for jobs to take care of myself. It wasn't till until I turned twenty-four years old when someone at my workplace talked about having a better future in United States. That's when I decided that I need to move to USA for a better life, security and peace of mind that I never had while growing up.
10. I first came to the United States in September 2005. The last time I entered United States was in 2010 or 2011 I don't exactly remember.

#### GOOD FAITH MARRIAGE:

11. After spending a good chunk of time here in the United States, working multiple jobs over the years and living the life I had always wished for, I met my husband, Ricardo Gonzalez, on July 20, 2019, in Vegas, NV. My sister had to send some money to me from Tijuana and his parents used to work with my sister, so my sister sent me money with their help through him. That's when I met him for first time. He further offered me if I wanted to send anything back to my sister in Tijuana and I agreed. That's when I saw him again and it all started.
12. After every meeting we wanted to see each other and spend time with one another. We always ended up grabbing something to eat or drink after meeting up. It was my way of saying thank you to him for bringing and sending things to and from Tijuana to my family there.
13. By our fourth date, we started to get personal and spoke about our interests, likes and dislikes. Two weeks later, we got committed and soon after that, he proposed. We remain engaged for around two weeks well and tied the knot on 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2019.
14. Those two months was the most beautiful time I had spent with this man. It was the perfect relationship and that's why we got married so fast. I was head over heels in love with this man. And so was he, as he used to say it.

#### EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

15. The emotional abuse started as soon as I said "I do...". It was our wedding day and after the ceremony my sisters decided to throw us a party. I told them that we had plans to go out and eat but since everyone was really happy and excited so I agreed and went with the flow. As soon as I told my husband about the plans, he flipped. He started getting loud and yelled "What do you mean a party? We were just going to go to dinner". I hadn't seen him mad before that,

and he didn't speak to me for a whole day. After startling me all of a sudden, we carried on with the party but as soon as he found out that there would be more people joining in, he got upset again and started laying down rules and told me that he hates surprises and that we need to plan our moments way ahead and one can't just go from changing one moment to the next. That was the first time when I had seen him like this and I kind of understood that things will not be as easy as they seemed with this man.

16. Soon after everyone in my family understood his nature. He became very controlling of me. My family had to make plans weeks in advance in order to spend time with me. He still used to get upset if I went out with my sisters. I had changed my actions in order to avoid his reaction. He used to get drunk excessively if I refused to do things according to his will. He used to get so drunk that his speech slurred and even then, he used to make me feel bad about things that made me happy.
17. He started controlling me to such a point where he started to have a problem with the way I dressed. Before getting married to him, I used to wear shorts and short dresses and when I did that in front of him, he used to say things like I don't look good or as a married woman I should behave and should dress up modestly. I started wearing loose clothes because if I wouldn't listen to him, he would start drinking excessively which effected our married life severely.
18. Things did not remain limited to my clothes. Before getting married to him, I had two jobs. I used to go out with my sisters and friends and used to have a good time. He made me quit one of the jobs saying that he wants to spend more time with me but that was just his way of controlling me. The real reason for him to make me quit was the insecurity of male clientele frequenting more to the store.
19. He crossed the limits when one day this emotional abuse turned to physical abuse. We had a heated argument where he made me choose between him and my mother. I told him that I can't leave my mother nor him. She looks after my child when I am at work and he's the man I love and got married to. He went on saying that I should choose my mother and that he would leave the house. Since he had a lot of training in self-defense, so he knew this trick where one puts their two fingers on someone's neck and pinch them to paralyze them temporarily. He went ahead and put his fingers on my neck and pinched me really hard. I instantly fell on the floor and laid there conscious but wasn't able to move even an inch! Then he went around abusing me verbally and called me a whore and that I want to fuck around with other men. I reported the incident to police, although, I was afraid for myself too. Till the time police showed up, he was gone. He surrendered himself to the police a few days after and begged for forgiveness from me. But every time he had to appear in court, he used to

taunt me, and blame me, and make me look like the bad guy by saying things like that it is all my fault that he had to go to the court that day.

20. Things improved for a very short time period. But all this controlling every single day made me feel worthless and damaged. I felt like there is no way out and that I am doomed. I used to remain in a constant state of worry and anxiousness. There were times when I was not able to swallow food because of fear of his abrupt reactions! The fear kept me on high alert. I used to feel exhausted and trapped all the time. I, still, usually remain worried for the kids. I feel like he will take them away from me and I won't be able to do anything about it.
21. Although he has stopped drinking now but there was a time when he crashed my car while drunk. He did that because we had a fight in the house that day and as a reaction he smashed my car to pieces. I was really upset about the whole thing.
22. Whenever he goes to see his parents in Tijuana, he says things like he wished I would come but since I am undocumented, I cannot be involved in such plans. He would always taunt me and make hurtful comments about my legal status and how I am illegal here so I cannot travel.
23. There was an incidence where he proudly boasted about him cheating on me with this sex worker and how good she was at giving him a blowjob that blew his mind away. He did that because we had a fight about him finding out about a customer being generous and leaving me a good tip at work. He made me feel worthless and told me how ugly I looked. He changed my entire appearance himself and then had the audacity to say and do such things.
24. I am also not allowed to put up any passwords on my phone or hide anything from him on my social media. He says that we don't have anything to hide from each other, while he puts a password on everything on his phone. I have no sense of privacy. He keeps an eye on every thing I do while using my phone.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE:

25. Every time we fight, it results in him getting mad like crazy. He gets so angry that he waves his arms around, pounding on things. One time he threw a cup at me. I got saved by almost an inch. In that moment, I felt like I would die because it felt like he threw that cup at me on purpose, aiming for my head! I was in a state of shock and wasn't able to sleep all night!
26. Another incident took place last weekend. It was his birthday and I wanted to do something nice for him. I planned a small surprise getaway for both of us. I got a room booked for us and wanted to spend some time by the pool and in the casino. I did not let him know beforehand because it was a surprise. I told him that my mother would be staying with the kids. But he ended up saying that he doesn't like my family's involvement with the kids and that my mother interferes with our relationship. We ended up not going. He didn't want to

celebrate his birthday anymore and he blamed me for ruining everything. We did not talk until the next day and he ended up saying that he doesn't like to celebrate his birthday because it ends up in a disaster always.

27. My husband also threatens me by saying that he would report me to the police for being an illegal immigrant during fights. He says so when he thinks I would leave him. This happens when I can't anymore of his abuse! He behaves like an animal when we are alone but changes instantly when we are out in public or with family.
28. There was a time when I used to blame alcohol for his behavior. I used to think that drugs and alcohol are making him do whatever he does. But that's not the case. Before getting married, he confessed to smoke weed too much. I told him that I won't see him if he won't quit. Which he did but he said that he won't quit drinking. I was okay with that since he promised to drink on weekends only. But after getting married he started drinking every day. It has been a year since he stopped drinking alcohol. This happened when he pinched my neck and I got paralyzed temporarily. He was sorry for what he did and asked for forgiveness. I told him if my son forgave him then I would too. My son made him promise that he would not drink again. And he did not drink after that. His behavior, however, has not changed much.

#### VERBAL ABUSE:

29. In almost every fight, he calls me names. He insults me, my character, my dignity and makes me question everything I do.
30. When I go see my family or friends, he mostly accuses me by saying that I must have been out with another man. Once, he was at work and I went to pick my child from my mother's place after my shift got over. My mother wasn't feeling too well so I stayed with her for one hour to help her around the house. He got back home only to find me nowhere. That's when he flipped and when I reached home, he went all crazy and twisted my arm so bad that I was in pain for days. He did that by calling me a slut and that I must have slept around with someone in his absence. It was very traumatic for my child to witness as well.
31. One time, I forgot to keep a charger with me and my phone's battery died. I reached home and plugged in the charger. As soon as I turned my phone on, it was full of hateful and abusive messages sent by my husband. He thought I eloped with someone and he threatened that he would find me and would rip all my clothes in front of the whole world, wherever he would find me with the man I have eloped with.

#### PHYSICAL ABUSE:

32. There have been multiple incidents, in fact every time we fight, he gets abusive physically. I have ended using make up to hide the shiner and blue eye and

other marks on my face before leaving for work. Once during a fight, he slapped me so hard that it left a mark. He ended up saying that after this, no man would find me beautiful and when the mark would heal, he would hit me again.

33. My husband once forced me to try weed. According to him it would make me feel relaxed and that I need it. I refused to do so. It ended up in him spitting on my face for being too shaky all the time and then he laughed at me for being agitated.

34. I have never felt safe with him when he drives. When he wasn't sober, he used to drink heavily when we used to go out. And he always drove home in that condition! Always! Now after he has gotten sober, he still drives recklessly which always triggers extreme panic attacks after I get off the car.

#### SEXUAL ABUSE:

35. There is no such thing as consent between us. When he wants to have sex, he doesn't ask. And as a wife, according to him, it is my duty to please him or else he would sleep around with other women. There are times when I am exhausted or don't feel like having sex with him. I just can't say no as I am not allowed to do so.

36. There was a time when he wanted to have sex with me in different positions. Those were pleasurable for him but were extremely painful and uncomfortable for me. I eventually spoke up and told him how uncomfortable that made me. He still insists to this day, and says it's normal and until I won't get used to it, I won't enjoy it, but I refuse. This has mostly happened because of his addiction to pornography. He has also forced me to watch it with him and do what he is showing me. It makes me ashamed and hopeless.

37. He is too regular when it comes to sex. He wants to have sex before going to work and also after coming back without any gap or break. There are times when it just gets too frustrating for me and I scream on the inside when he is on top of me but I feel helpless. There are days when I remain numb after the deed and cry when he is done.

38. There have been times when I have felt that he has been with another woman but I was not able to prove it. I have never gotten any infection or disease myself that may affect me negatively when it comes to reproductive health.

#### FINANCIAL ABUSE:

39. Since my husband has an extremely controlling nature, he never lets me spend even my own hard-earned money. First time when he asked me for my money and I refused, he threatened to report me to the authorities for working illegally here.

40. According to him, since he is the man of the house, hence he gets to tell me where and how the money has to be spent. Even if I go out to buy groceries or

anything else for our daughter, he keeps an eye on every cent that I spend. He keeps a check by asking for receipts and literally snatching the change from my hand. He also gives me a fixed amount to spend every week for food and groceries.

41. Like I told before, I had two jobs when I got married to him. I was a cashier at a store and he made me quit that job because according to him that store catered more male clientele.
42. All this makes me feel trapped. It feels like I am his slave in every way. Its exhausting and traumatizing every single day. I go by without sleeping for nights. There are times when I don't eat because of the anxiety. I just cannot do anything that I want to do or things that make me happy. It's getting hard every single day.

#### GOOD MORAL CHARACTER:

43. I do not have any recent criminal history. However, an incident happened back in 2011. I remember I had left USA for two years. This happened when in 2009 I was married to someone else and he mistreated me. My mother found out and reported to the police. He was taken to jail and when he got out, he forcefully took me back to Mexico. I stayed there for two years but I came back. I didn't feel safe there. I wasn't able to do anything there and I had to take a huge risk while coming back. It was getting impossible to live with my ex-husband. So, this happened when I was coming back to USA in 2011. I was trying to cross the Tijuana border when this person who was supposed to help me, handed me some fake papers. By the time I got to the officers, I got really nervous. The officers were able to tell it wasn't me and those papers were not mine, so they arrested me. I was arrested for entering illegally in the United States and I stayed in jail for three days. They sent me back to Mexico after that. I re-entered USA the same year and here I am till now.
44. I was convicted again in 2015 for driving after having a few beers. I wasn't drunk but I got pulled over for a broken tail light. I paid the fine and finished probation too. However, I learned my lesson and I have been careful ever since.
45. As an individual, faith plays an important part in my life. Every Sunday, I go to church with my children and it's God that has given me strength to survive all these hardships that I have faced in my life.
46. As an active member of the church, I always take part in and help around with food drives, donation drives and other service things. It makes me feel at peace. I have also helped my brother-in-law a lot when I was single. I am very close to him. I had money in my savings that I gave him for food for him and my sister. I also drive my friends and family around if they don't have money to pay for cabs. I don't have much myself either but I do whatever I can to ease others problems.

47. I am a good person because I care about others. I don't like to get in trouble or fight with people. I respect everyone as much as I can. I help those around me when I can, I care about the wellbeing of others, no matter if I know them or not. My family is my priority. I care about my mother at a hundred percent, which has brought problems to my relationship, but I'm never going to leave her alone. My daughter means everything to me. I want her to be okay and I want to be able to provide for her for years and years.

#### CONCLUSION:

48. As an illegal immigrant, I am not able pay any taxes. A country that provided me and my family with shelter, safety and security; where my kids have health insurance, good education and food on the table because I am able to work; and most importantly, where I am hopeful to live my life independently all over again – I feel obliged to pay back in some way and the least I can do is have a valid social security number to be able to pay taxes.
49. For me, my kids are everything. They're my whole life! I got out of one abusive marriage when I ran away from Mexico to give quality life to my child. If I get deported again, I fear not only for my life but also my child's. My ex-husband has tried to contact me multiple times and has told me that he still loves me. He has further added that he is in jail because of me and I would have to pay if I go back. I fear for my life if I go back there. I also have a daughter who was born here. If I get deported, I won't be able to see her and she would be left with this monster of a man I got married to! This will tear me into pieces!
50. Moreover, the area where I used to live was very corrupt back in Tijuana. The drug mafia was very dominant and the public had to pay the mafia in order for them to stay away and keep their families safe. I do not want my kids to be raised in such a place and such an environment.
51. With all this, having a legal status will give me the power to leave my now-abusive marriage with my head held up high. I could get a better job, do my taxes, take better care of my children and my family and general. I think the worst part of being illegal is the fright you feel every single day, you never know what's going to happen, so feeling safe here would be a dream come true.

I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, INFORMATION, AND BELIEF.

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[ANGELINA DÍAZ RODRÍGUEZ]

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DATE