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Today San Bernardino County Deputy Sheriff Nathan Gastineau, appeared in court for a disposition hearing. He is charged with numerous felonies, including three counts of lewd or lascivious acts with a child 14 or 15 years old, (P.C. 288(c)(1) and three counts of unlawful sexual intercourse with a minor.

The defendant has entered a not guilty plea and has been released on bail.

I represent the minor who is alleged to be the victim in this case. I came to court today to monitor the progress of this matter and to observe the rally of the defendant's supporter which was to take place outside of the court house.

Of course the defendant has a right to be presumed innocent in a

court of law unless and until he is proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt by either a judge or a jury or by the entry of a guilty plea.

In this court process the defendant will be afforded all of his rights and will be insured a fair trial.

However, I would like everyone to remember that the child that I represent also has rights. She is a minor, not an adult. She should also be afforded due process and be treated with respect and dignity.

The rally today is very unusual. In the 36 years that I have been practicing law I cannot think of another instance where a law enforcement officer charged with sex crimes against a child had people come to the courthouse to hold a rally in support of him.

What does their support mean? Are they saying that the defendant did not commit the crimes for which he was charged or that the minor child is to blame if crimes were committed against her? In the

alternative, are they trying to argue that it should not be a crime to have sex with a child?

Whatever their message is they should know that this case will be decided within the justice system - not by protests outside of the courthouse.

This is not a sporting match or a political rally. It is a court of law. My client will not be deterred or intimidated by attacks on her. She is young, but she understands that she has a duty to tell the truth and she intends to do that.

Her family and I are proud of her courage and look forward to protecting her and supporting her throughout this ordeal.

Gloria Allred

Attorney at Law

representing the alleged minor victim of Deputy Nathan Gastineau

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