Christopher B. Dolan, Esq. (SBN 165358) 1 Quinton B. Cutlip, Esq. (SBN 168030) 2 THE DOLAN LAW FIRM 1438 Market Street FILED 3 San Francisco, California 94102 Tel: (415) 421-2800 4 DEC 3 0 2013 Fax: (415) 421-2830 5 Attorneys for Plaintiffs 6 LATASHA WINKFIELD 7 8 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT 9 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA OAKLAND 10 SBA @13-5995 LATASHA WINKFIELD, an individual 11 parent and guardian of Jahi McMath, a 12 minor COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY **RELIEF AND REQUEST FOR** 13 Plaintiff, TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF 14 V. Violation of the Free Exercise 15 1. Clause of First Amendment of the 16 **United States Constitution** CHILDRENS HOSPITAL OAKLAND, Dr.) 2. Violation of the Right to Privacy David Durand M.D. and DOES 1 through 17 Guaranteed Under the Fourth 10. inclusive Amendment of the United States Constitution 18 3. Violation of the Right to Privacy Defendants Guaranteed under the Fourteenth 19 Amendment of the United States Constitution 20 4. Violation of Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 21 U.S.C. § 794) 22 5. Violation of The American's With Disabilities Act 42 U.S.C. §12101 et 23 seq. REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY 24 TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER **INJUNCTIVE RELIEF - RCFC 65** 25 26 27

Plaintiffs, and each of them, allege the following:

JURISDICTION

1. Counts in this Action arise out of the First, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution, The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794) and The American's With Disabilities Act 42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.

VENUE

2. Venue is proper in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. sections 84 and 1391. The events that gave rise to this complaint are occurring in Oakland, Alameda County, in the State of California, and one or more of the defendants has its Principal Place of Business in Oakland, Alameda County, California.

INTRADISTRICT ASSIGNMENT

3. The actions that gave rise to this complaint occurred in Oakland, Alameda County, California. Assignment of this action to either the San Francisco Division or Oakland Division of this Court is appropriate according to Local Rule 3-2(d).

PARTIES

- 4. Latasha Winkfield is an adult and a resident of the State of California. She is the mother of Jahi McMath. Purusant to the California Family Code § 6910 she is the healthcare decision maker for Jahi McMath, a minor.
- 6. Defendant CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OAKLAND (CHO) is a non-profit hospital corporation with its principal place of business in Oakland, California. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and on the basis of said information and belief, alleged that CHO receives funding from the state and federal government which is used to directly and indirectly provide healthcare services to individuals including but not limited to the Jahi McMath.
 - 8. Plaintiff is informed and believes that Defendant DR. DAVID DURAND is a

resident of Alameda County in California. He is the Chief of Pediatrics of Children's Hospital Oakland.

- 9. Plaintiffs are ignorant of the true names and capacities of defendants sued herein as Does 1 through 10, inclusive, and therefore sue these defendants by such fictitious names and capacities. Plaintiffs are informed and believe and based thereon allege that each of the fictitiously named defendants is responsible in some manner for the occurrences herein alleged, and that plaintiffs' injuries as herein alleged were proximately caused by the actions and/or in-actions of said Doe defendants. Plaintiffs will amend this complaint to include the true identities of said doe defendants when they are ascertained.
- 10. At all times mentioned, each of the defendants was acting as the agent, principal, employee, and/or employer of one or more of the remaining defendants and was, at all times herein alleged, acting within the purpose, course, and scope of such agency and/or employment for purposes of respondent superior and/or vicarious liability as to all other defendants.
- 11. At all times mentioned herein, the defendants, and each of them, employed, hired, trained, retained, and/or controlled the actions of all other defendants, and each of them.

FACTS

- 12. On December 9, 2013 Jahi McMath underwent a routine tonsillectomy at Children's Hospital Oakland.
- 13. Following the procedure Jahi suffered a large blood loss and, as a result, she suffered a heart attack and a loss of oxygen to her brain. Plaintiff Latasha Winkfield is ignorant of the cause of said bleeding at this time but understands it stems from the surgery.
- 14. Jahi suffered brain damage and has been maintained on a respirator requiring ventilation support. With pulmonary support provided by the ventilator her heart and other organs are functioning. She has undergone certain tests which have demonstrated brain damage from the

lack of oxygen. She is totally disabled at this time and is severely limited in all major life activities being unable to do anything of her own volition.

- 15. California Health and Safety Code § 7180. In force and effect, at all times material to this action provides that "An individual who has sustained either (1) irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions, or (2) irreversible cessation of all functions of the entire brain, including the brain stem, is dead. A determination of death must be made in accordance with accepted medical standards."
- 16. California Health and Safety Code § 7181 provides that an individual can be pronounced dead by a determination of "irreversible cessation of all functions of the entire brain, including brain stem." It requires "independent" confirmation by another physician.
- 17. Defendants Children's Hospital by and through its Chief of Pediatrics Defendant Durand, has informed Plaintiff Latasha Winkfield that Jahi is "Dead, Dead, Dead, Dead" utilizing the definition of "brain death" derived from Cal. Health & Safety Code § 7180.
- 18. Plaintiffs are Christians with firm religious beliefs that as long as the heart is beating, Jahi is alive. Plaintiff Winkfield has personal knowledge of other who had been diagnosed as brain dead, where the decision makers were encouraged to "pull the plug" yet they didn't and their loved one emerged from legal brain death to where they had cognitive ability and some even fully recovering. These religious beliefs involve providing all treatment, care, and nutrition to a body that is living, treating it with respect and seeking to encourage its healing.
- 19. Defendants have informed Latasha Winkfield that they intend to disconnect the ventilator that Jahi McMath is relying upon to breath claiming that she is brain dead pursuant to California Health and Safety Code § 7180.
- 20. Defendants claim that, since they have pronounced Jahi dead that Latasha Winkfield has no right to exercise any decision making authority vis-à-vis maintaining her daughter on a

ventilator.

- 21. Defendants have indicated that they wish to remove life support within the next 24 hours if possible and definitely before Christmas.
- 22. To stop Defendants from terminating Jahi's ventilator support, on December 20th, 2013, Plaintiff Winkfield filed a verified petition and ex parte application seeking an order (1) authorizing the petitioner (Jahi's mother) to make medical care decisions for Jahi and for an injunction under to prohibit respondent CHO from withholding life support from Jahi. (Probate Code 3201, 4776, 4770.) The court set the application for hearing at 1:30 p.m. on December 20, 2013, in Department 31, and requested respondent CHO to submit written opposition to petitioner's ex parte application.
- 23. On December 20, 2013, the court temporarily restrained CHO from changing Jahi's level of medial support. The order stated in part: "Respondent CHO, its agents, employees, servants and independent contractors are ordered to continue to provide Jahi McMath with the treatment and support which is currently being provided as per the current medications and physician's orders until further order of the court." The Court denied Plaintiff (Petitioner) Winkfield's request that Jahi be provided a nasal-gastric tube or other medical treatment in addition to the maintenance of "status quo" medical treatment. The order also continued the hearing to Monday, December 23, 2013.
- 24. On December 23, 2103 Judge Grillo appointed Dr. Paul Fisher as an independent expert to con Pursuant to that order, Dr. Fisher examined Jahi the afternoon of December 23, 2013. The court also continued the hearing to December 24, 2013, to receive Dr. Fisher's report and testimony from a CHO physician (Dr. Shanahan) who first determined that Jahi was brain dead, as of December 11, 2013. By separate order dated December 23, 2013, the court extended the restraining order through December 30, 2013, or such other date as the court might later

determine.

- 25. On December 24, 2013, the court, during closed and public sessions received testimony from Dr. Shanahan and Dr. Fisher and ruled that Jahi McMath was "brain dead" under California Health and Safety Code Sections 7080 & 7081 then denied the petition and dissolved the TRO effective 5:00 p.m. December 30, 2013 thereby ruling that after that time Children's Hospital was no longer required to provide any further care or treatment to Jahi McMath and could thereafter cease offering of cardio-pulmonary ventilator support.
- 26. Plaintiff Latasha Winkfield has asked that her child be given nutritional feeding through a nasal-gastric tube or gastric tube to provide her with nutrients. She has also asked for care to be administered to her daughter to maintain her heart, tissues, organs, etc. The Defendants have refused to provide such treatment stating that they do not "treat dead people" nor do they feed them. They have denied her ability to make decisions over the heath care of her daughter. Plaintiff Winkfield has sought alternate placement of her daughter, outside the Defendant's facility but, because of her unfamiliarity with such matters, the holiday period, and the requirement that Jahi have a tracheostomy tube and a gastric tube inserted for stable delivery of air and nutrition to Jahi. Plaintiff has now secured such alternate placement and transportation but requires time for that to occur. If the defendants proceed sith their plans she will expire.
- 27. Plaintiff Latasha Winkfield vehemently opposes the efforts of the Defendants to exclude her from the decision making regarding her daughter and their insistence that she has no right vis-à-vis the decision to disconnect the ventilator that provides oxygen necessary for the heart to beat and the organs to be kept profused with blood. Plaintiff Latasha Winkfield has expressly forbidden the defendants from removing life support. Defendantshave refused her requests for nutritional support and the placement of a tracheostomy tube and a gastric tube stating that she has no rights to request medical care for her daughter as she is dead and that "CHO does not treat

dead people. She has video evidence demonstrating movement of her child which Dr. Paul Byrne has indicated is proof of her being alive and not dead.

28. The State definition which Defendants are relying upon is in stark and material difference to the religious beliefs of Latasha Winkfield and her Daughter. She feels that disconnection of the ventilator is tantamount to killing Jahi.

FACTS WARANTING EMERGECY TEMPORARY RESTRAINING ORDER AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF

- 29. There is a substantial likelihood of success on the merits given the wealth of decisional authority, both in the Court of Appeal, and the U.S. Supreme Court demonstrating the constitutional rights people have over their decision making role in their healthcare and for parents over the healthcare decisions concerning their children
- 30. The injuries threatened of the conduct is not enjoined will be irrevocable and irreparable, Jahi McMath will be taken off a ventilator, her heart will stop beating and she will cease to show any signs associated with a living body. If she is prohibited from making healthcare decisions re nutrition, medications, etc., he daughter will starve and he electrolytes will get out of balance and other complications will arise that will hasten, and ultimately lead to, Jahi's death.
- 31. The threatened injury is death to Jahi and loss of a daughter to Latasha. Defendants have stated no reason they would suffer a loss other than its demoralizing to treat a dead person.
- 32. This case is one of national interest and the issue of the right to participate in healthcare decisions is one of great public concern. Therefore, granting of preliminary injunction is in the public interest.

TERMS OF THE PROPOSED RESTRAINING ORDER

33. Plaintiffs seek to have defendants be restrained from removing the ventilator.

- 34. Plaintiffs seek to have defendants initiate the provision of nutrition to Jahi.
- 35. Plaintiffs seek to have to take all medically available steps/measures to seek to improve her health and prolong her life including nutrition including the insertion of a tracheostomy tube and a gastric tube.
- 36. Plaintiff seeks to be provided ample time and support (including the placement of the tracheostomy tube and the gastric tube) to try and locate a facility that will accept her as a patient to treat her and provide her vent support

FIRST COUNT

(Violation of First Amendment Rights - Free Exercise of Religion)

- 37. Plaintiffs incorporate by reference as if fully set forth herein paragraphs 1-36.
- 38. This action arises under the United States Constitution, particularly under the provisions of the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.
- 39. The acts complained of herein are being committed by the Defendants, and are depriving Plaintiff WINKFIELD and Jahi McMath of their rights to freely express their religious beliefs. The denial of these rights threatens the very existence of Jahi and will completely sever the relationship that still endures between Latasha and Jahi.
- 40. The Defendants, and each of them, knowingly and willfully conspired and agreed among themselves to violate Plaintiffs' civil rights so as to injure Plaintiffs, and each of them.
- 41. As a proximate cause of the Defendants' conduct, Plaintiffs, and each of them, are incurring attorney fees and litigation costs, including the costs of retaining experts.
- 42. Plaintiffs pray for relief in the form of a declaration of the right of Plaintiff Latasha Winkfield to exercise control over the determination of the healthcare to be provided to and received by Jahi McMath and a declaration that the application of California Health and Safety

Code § 7181, as defendants seek to do, giving them the right to discontinue ventilator support over the objection of Plaintiff Winkfield, is unconstitutional as an interference with Plaintiffs exercise of their religious beliefs.

43. Plaintiff prays for an injunction prohibiting Defendants from removing ventilator support and an order that they institute nutritional support and other medical treatments to as to provide her with proper care and treatment designed promote her maximum level of medical improvement, to insert a tracheostomy tube and a gastric tube, and to provide Plaintiff a reasonable time to locate an alternate facility to care for her child in accordance with her religious beliefs.

SECOND COUNT

(Violation of Fourth Amendment Rights - Privacy Rights)

- 44. Plaintiffs incorporate, herein by reference, paragraphs 1 through 43 as though fully set forth herein.
- 45. This action arises under the United States Constitution, particularly under the provisions of the Privacy Rights established and recognized as existing within and flowing from Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.
- 46. Each of the acts complained of herein was committed by the Defendants, and each of them, and by seeking to deny Latasha Winkfield and Jahi McMath of the rights to privacy including but not limited to their rights to have control over their health care, by refusing to provide health care to them, and by denying them the right to have control over the health care decisions affecting Jahi, which are recognized under the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.
- 47. The conduct of the Defendants, and each of them, has deprived Plaintiffs of the rights of privacy that they have over their medical decisions.

- 48. As a direct and proximate result of the Defendants' conduct, as alleged herein,
 Plaintiffs are in great risk of the death of Jahi McMath occurring. She has been suffering, as has
 Latasha Winkfield by being prohibited from obtaining proper care for Jahi and by being deprived
 of the right of knowing that Jahi was being cared for and, instead, fearing that she was becoming
 weaker and dying because of the refusal of the defendants to provide treatment.
- 49. As a direct and proximate result of the Defendants' conduct, the Plaintiffs have suffered past and future general damages in amounts to be determined by proof at trial.
- 50. As a proximate cause of the Defendants' conduct, Plaintiffs, and each of them, are incurring attorney fees and litigation costs, including the costs of retaining experts.
- 51. Plaintiffs pray for relief in the form of a declaration of their rights of privacy relating to their rights to control over their medical decisions and choices. Plaintiff further request declaratory relief that the application of the determination of the healthcare to be provided to and be received by Jahi McMath and a declaration that the application of California Health and Safety Code § 7181, in the manner in which Defendants seek to do so, so as to deprive Plaintiffs of their ability to choose to remain on ventilator support is an unconstitutional interference with Plaintiffs exercise of rights to privacy.
- 52. Plaintiff prays for an injunction prohibiting Defendants from removing ventilator support and an order that they institute nutritional support and other medical treatments to as to provide her with proper care and treatment designed to promote her maximum level of medical improvement, to insert a tracheostomy tube and a gastric tube, and to provide Plaintiff a reasonable time to locate an alternate facility to care for her child in accordance with her religious beliefs.

THIRD COUNT (Violation of Fourteenth Amendment Rights to Privacy)

53. Plaintiffs incorporate, herein by reference, paragraphs 1 through 52 as though fully

set forth herein.

- 54. This action arises under the United States Constitution, particularly under the provisions of the Fourteenth amendment and its right to privacy.
- 55. Each of the acts complained of herein was committed by the Defendants, and each of them, and by seeking to deny Latasha Winkfield and Jahi McMath of the rights to privacy including but not limited to their rights to have control over their health care, by refusing to provide health care to them, and by denying them the right to have control over the health care decisions affecting Jahi, which are recognized under the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.
- 56. As a proximate cause of the Defendants' conduct, Plaintiffs, and each of them, are incurring attorney fees and litigation costs, including the costs of retaining experts.
- 57. Plaintiffs pray for relief in the form of a declaration of their rights Privacy over the healthcare decisions concerning Jahi's rights to exercise control over her medical decisions and that the efforts to/ decision of CHO to unilaterally remove Jahi from the ventilator under California Health and Safety Code § 7181, are an unconstitutional interference with Plaintiff's Privacy rights.
- 58. Plaintiff prays for an injunction prohibiting Defendants from removing ventilator support and an order that they institute nutritional support and other medical treatments so as to provide her with proper care and treatment designed to promote her maximum level of medical improvement, to insert a tracheostomy tube and a gastric tube, and to provide Plaintiff a reasonable time to locate an alternate facility to care for her child in accordance with her religious beliefs.

FOURTH COUNT

(Violation of the Federal Rehabilitation Act)

59. Plaintiffs incorporate, herein by reference, paragraphs 1 through 60 as though fully

set forth herein.

- 60. Jahi McMath is a handicapped and/or disabled individual as that term is defined under both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- 61. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination against an "otherwise qualified" handicapped individual, solely by reason of his or her handicap, under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.
- 62. Hospitals such Defendant Children's Hospital Oakland, that accepts Medicare and Medicaid funding, is subject to the Rehabilitation Act.
- 63. The Hospital has admitted that the sole reason it wishes to withhold ventilator treatment and the sole reason that it refuses to provide nutrition and other medical treatment for Jahi McMath over her mother's objections, is because of Jahi's brain injury—her handicap and disability.
- 64. Jahi is "otherwise qualified" to receive treatment dismal long term prospects of living.
- 65. Thus, the Hospital's desire to withhold ventilator treatment, nutritional support, and other medical treatment, from Jahi over her mother's objections, violates the Rehabilitation Act.
- 66. As a proximate cause of the Defendants' conduct, Plaintiffs, and each of them, are incurring attorney fees and litigation costs, including the costs of retaining experts.
- 67. Plaintiffs pray for relief in the form of a declaration the effort to remove Jahi from her ventilator under California Health and Safety Code § 7181, and their refusal to provide her with medical care and nutritional support violates the Rehabilitation Act and, therefore,

 Defendants should be ordered to continue said support and to provide nutritional support and other medical support designed to allow Jahi to continue existing and to have a best chance of regaining some brain function.

68. Plaintiff prays for an injunction prohibiting Defendants from removing ventilator support and an order that they institute nutritional support and other medical treatments so as to provide her with proper care and treatment designed to promote her maximum level of medical improvement, to insert a tracheostomy tube and a gastric tube, and to provide Plaintiff a reasonable time to locate an alternate facility to care for her child in accordance with her religious beliefs.

FIFTH COUNT

(Americans with Disabilities Act)

- 69. Plaintiffs incorporate, herein by reference, paragraphs 1 through 68 as though fully set forth herein.
- 70. Section 302 of the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") prohibits discrimination against disabled individuals by "public accommodations." 42 U.S.C. § 12182.
- 71. A "disability" is "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities" of an individual. 42 U.S.C. § 12102(2). This includes any physiological disorder or condition affecting the neurological system, musculoskeletal system, or sense organs, among others. 28 C.F.R. § 36.104 (definition of "physical or mental impairment").
- 72. Brain damage from lack of oxygen is a disability, because it affects Jahi's neurological functioning, ability to walk, and ability to see or talk.
- 73. "Public accommodation" is defined to include a "professional office of a health care provider, hospital, or other service establishment." 42 U.S.C. § 12181(7). The Hospital is a public accommodation under the ADA. 28 C.F.R. § 36.104.
- 74. Section 302(a) of the ADA states a general rule of nondiscrimination against the disabled: General rule. No individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or

accommodation of any place of public accommodations by any person who owns, leases (or leases to), or operates a place of public accommodation. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(a).

- 75. In contrast to the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA does not require that a handicapped individual be "otherwise qualified" to receive the benefits of participation. Further, section 302(b)(1)(A) of the ADA states that "[i]t shall be discriminatory to subject an individual or class of individuals on the basis of a disability ... to a denial of the opportunity of the individual or class to participate in or benefit from the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of an entity." 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(1)(A)(i).
- 76. The Hospital seeks to deny Jahi McMath the benefits of ventilator services, nutrition and other medical treatment to Jahi McMath by reason of her disability. The Hospital's claim is that it is "futile" to keep alive a "brain dead" baby, even though the mother has requested such treatment. But the plain language of the ADA does not permit the denial of ventilator services, and other medical services such as the provision of nutrition and medical treatment that would keep alive a brain injured child when those life-saving services would otherwise be provided to a baby without disabilities at the parent's request. The Hospital's reasoning would lead to the denial of medical services to brain injured individuals as a class of disabled individuals. Such discrimination against a vulnerable population class is exactly what the American with Disabilities Act was enacted to prohibit. The Hospital would therefore violate the ADA if it were to withhold ventilator treatment, nutrition and other medical treatment to Jahi McMath.
- 77. As a proximate cause of the Defendants' conduct, Plaintiffs, and each of them, are incurring attorney fees and litigation costs, including the costs of retaining experts.
- 78. Plaintiffs pray for relief in the form of a declaration that the efforts of Defendants, and each of them, to remove Jahi from her ventilator under California Health and Safety Code § 7181, and their refusal to provide her with medical care and nutritional support violates the ADA and,

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therefore, Defendants should be ordered to continue said support and to provide nutritional support and other medical support designed to allow Jahi to continue existing and to have a best chance of regaining brain function.

79. Plaintiff prays for an injunction prohibiting Defendants from removing ventilator support and an order that they institute nutritional support and other medical treatments so as to provide her with proper care and treatment designed to promote her maximum level of medical improvement, to insert a tracheostomy tube and a gastric tube, and to provide Plaintiff a reasonable time to locate an alternate facility to care for her child in accordance with her religious beliefs.

PRAYER

Wherefore, Plaintiffs pray for judgment against the Defendants as follows:

Counts One through Five.

- 1. Declaratory Relief;
- 2. Attorney fees;
- 3. Injunctive relief including, but not limited, to injunctions precluding removal of ventilator support and mandating introduction of nutritional support, insertion of a tracheostomy tube, gastric tube, and to provide other medical treatments and protocols designed to promote her maximum level of medical improvement and provision of sufficient time for Plaintiff to locate an alternate facility to care for her child in accordance with her religious beliefs.
- Plaintiffs also request that the Court issue whatever additional injunctive relief the
 Court deems appropriate; and
- 5. For such other and further relief as the court may deem proper.

Dated: December 29, 2013

THE DOLANGAW FIRM

15.

COMPLAINT

By______ Christopher B. Dolan, Esq. Attorneys for Latasha Winkfield