

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

July 16, 2014

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

We write to ask for your personal engagement to resolve over 900 international adoption cases of Congolese children who either have been or are in the process of being adopted by American families, yet who are unable to obtain Congolese exit permits due to a suspension in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). We understand that you have invited President Joseph Kabila to Washington in August for the first ever U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit, and we urge you to use this event and the time leading up to it as an opportunity to press for an expeditious resolution that is in the best interest of these children.

In September 2013, the DRC suspended the issuance of exit permits for children adopted by foreign parents, reportedly due to concerns about suspected malfeasance in the local DRC adoption process and lack of information about the well-being of adopted children after they arrived in their new homes. This suspension is having tragic consequences for these children as they wait to be united with their American families. Already, 10 children who were matched with American families have died since the suspension went into place and many more have urgent, life-threatening medical problems. There are over 350 children who have been legally adopted by US families and have been given Congolese passports and U.S. visas, but are still waiting for exit letters to be able to leave the DRC.

Overcoming this impasse is a priority for many in Congress and we appreciate the State Department's efforts to raise this issue with its Congolese counterparts. In April of this year, a bipartisan and bicameral group of 170 Members of Congress wrote to President Kabila and Prime Minister Matata Ponyo, urging the DRC government to resume processing exit permits for adopted children. To date, there has been no official response to this letter. Secretary Kerry raised this issue directly with President Kabila during his visit to Kinshasa in May and later that month the DRC government did release exit letters for 19 children adopted by American families, 4 of whom were medically fragile. Unfortunately, this represented only a small percentage of the completed cases and leaves dozens of critically ill children without the medical care they need to survive. The U.S. Department of State has continuously engaged the Congolese government to resolve the remaining completed cases, but to date all overtures have been unsuccessful. For example, when the DRC Director of General Migration (DGM) Francois Beya visited the United States in June, he received multiple requests for meetings ranging from State Department officials to Members of Congress. Mr. Beya declined to schedule any meetings on

the suspended exit permit issue. That is why we are requesting your direct engagement with President Kabila.

We respectfully request that you raise this human rights crisis with President Kabila prior to his attendance at the U.S.-African Leaders Summit next month, and then use the opportunity of the summit to press for a firm resolution. We would appreciate your leadership on this issue to help unite these children and their families.

Thank you for your attention to this important request.


Sincerely,



Senator Mary Landrieu



Senator James M. Inhofe



Representative Michele Bachmann



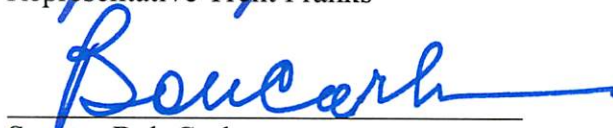
Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson



Representative Trent Franks



Representative Collin C. Peterson



Senator Bob Corker



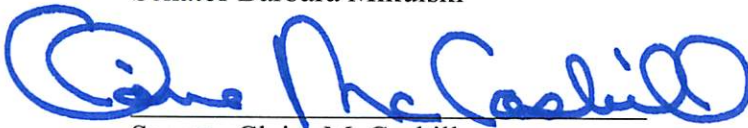
Senator Mitch McConnell




Senator Barbara Mikulski



Senator Tom Harkin



Senator Claire McCaskill



Senator Elizabeth Warren



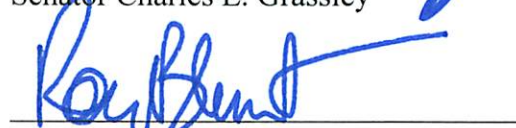
Senator Kay R. Hagan



Senator Charles E. Grassley



Senator Richard Burr



Senator Roy Blunt

Sherrod Brown

Senator Sherrod Brown

Pat Roberts

Senator Pat Roberts

Ted Cruz

Senator Ted Cruz

Rand Paul

Senator Rand Paul, M.D.

Debbie Stabenow

Senator Debbie Stabenow

John Cornyn

Senator John Cornyn

Mike Enzi

Senator Michael B. Enzi

Jerry Moran

Senator Jerry Moran

Barbara Boxer

Senator Barbara Boxer

Dianne Feinstein

Senator Dianne Feinstein

Angus King

Senator Angus S. King, Jr

Joe Donnelly

Senator Joe Donnelly

John Barrasso

Senator John Barrasso

Mark Pryor

Senator Mark Pryor

John Boozman

Senator John Boozman

Pat Toomey

Senator Pat Toomey

Dan Coats

Senator Dan Coats

Lamar Alexander

Senator Lamar Alexander

Maria Cantwell

Senator Maria Cantwell

Amy Klobuchar

Senator Amy Klobuchar

Kirsten Gillibrand

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

Mark Kirk

Senator Mark Kirk



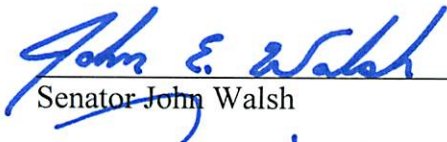
Senator David Vitter



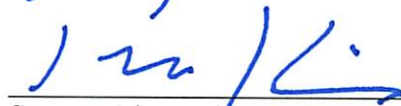
Senator Heidi Heitkamp



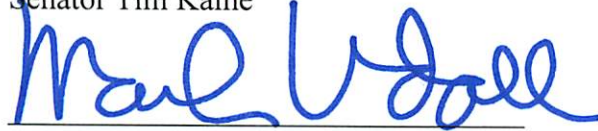
Senator Edward J. Markey



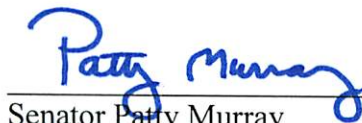
Senator John Walsh



Senator Tim Kaine



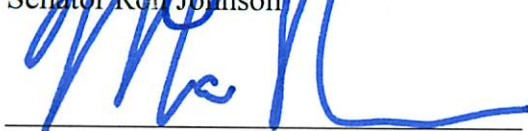
Senator Mark Udall



Senator Patty Murray



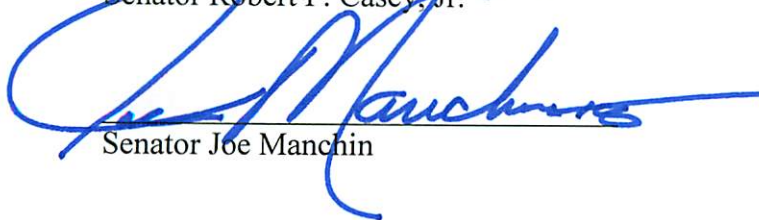
Senator Ron Johnson



Senator Marco Rubio



Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr.



Senator Joe Manchin



Senator Al Franken



Senator Deb Fischer



Senator Jeanne Shaheen



Senator Lisa Murkowski



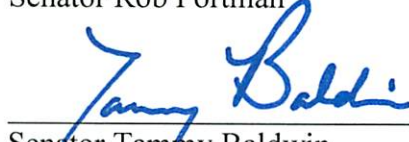
Senator Mark R. Warner



Senator Mike Johanns



Senator Rob Portman



Senator Tammy Baldwin



Senator Tim Johnson



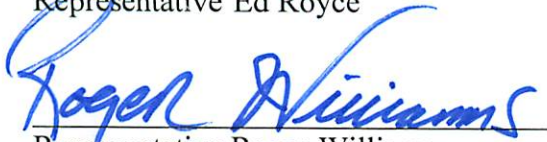
Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley




Senator Carl Levin

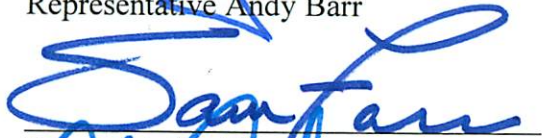

Representative Karen Bass

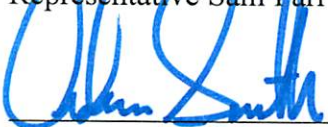

Representative Ed Royce

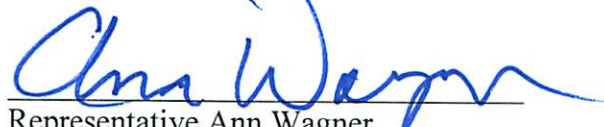

Representative Roger Williams


Representative André Carson


Representative Andy Barr

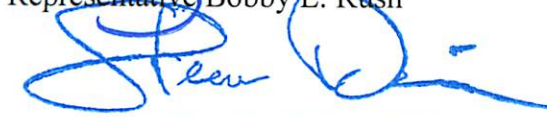

Representative Sam Farr


Representative Adam Smith


Representative Ann Wagner



Representative Tim Huelskamp


Representative Bobby L. Rush

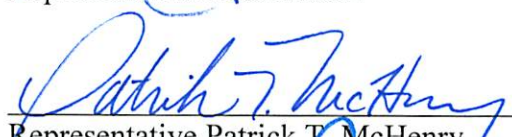

Representative Steve Daines

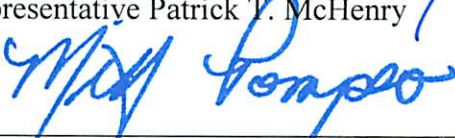

Representative Tom Latham

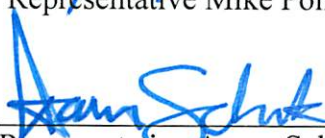

Representative Chris Smith


Representative Jim Renacci


Representative Reid Ribble



Representative Patrick T. McHenry

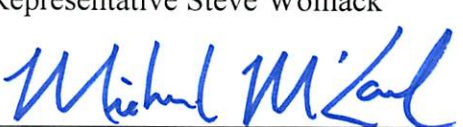

Representative Mike Pompeo


Representative Aaron Schock


Representative John Larson


Representative Jim McDermott


Representative Steve Womack


Representative Michael McCaul

X Joyce Beatty
Representative Joyce Beatty

Bradley Byrne
Representative Bradley Byrne

Don Young
Representative Don Young

X Steph Fincher
Representative Stephen Fincher

Mike Simpson
Representative Mike Simpson

X Cynthia M. Lummis
Representative Cynthia M. Lummis

X Filemon Vela
Representative Filemon Vela

X Frank R. Wolf
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John F. Tierney
Representative John F. Tierney

X Bill Flores
Representative Bill Flores

Charles Rangel
Representative Charles Rangel

John Kline
Representative John Kline

X Chellie Pingree
Representative Chellie Pingree

Corrine Brown
Representative Corrine Brown

Bruce Braley
Representative Bruce Braley

Alcee L. Hastings
Representative Alcee L. Hastings

Spencer Bachus
Representative Spencer Bachus

X George Holding
Representative George Holding

X Jim Cooper
Representative Jim Cooper

Blaine Luetkemeyer
Representative Blaine Luetkemeyer

X Bill Huizenga
Representative Bill Huizenga

X Dave Camp
Representative Dave Camp



Representative Earl Blumenauer



Representative John Shimkus




Representative Lloyd Doggett



Representative Marc Veasey



Representative Mike Honda



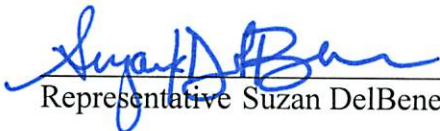
Representative Pat Tiberi



Representative Stephen F. Lynch



Representative Steve King



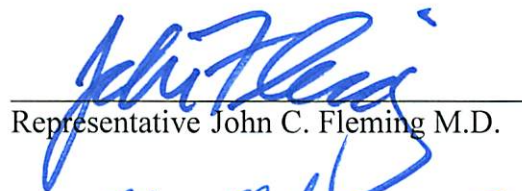
Representative Suzan DelBene



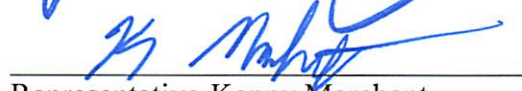
Representative Blake Farenthold



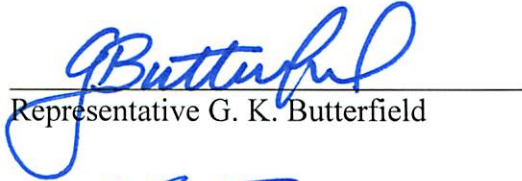
Representative Chuck Fleischmann



Representative John C. Fleming M.D.



Representative Kenny Marchant



Representative G. K. Butterfield



Representative Marlin Stutzman



Representative Gene Green



Representative Pete Sessions



Representative Howard Coble



Representative Susan W. Brooks



Representative Suzanne Bonamici



Representative Ann McLane Kuster



Representative Mark Meadows



Representative Diane Black



Representative Doug Lamborn



Representative James Lankford



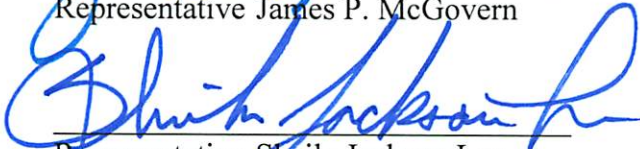
Representative Tim Griffin



Representative James P. McGovern



Representative Tom Cotton



Representative Sheila Jackson Lee



Representative Scott Rigell



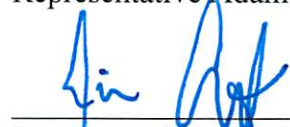
Representative Ted Poe



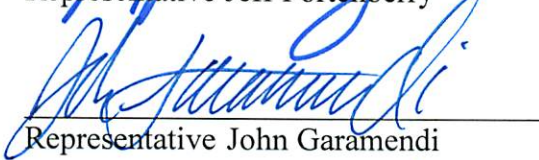
Representative Adam B. Schiff



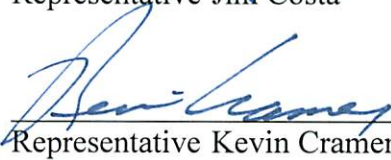
Representative Jeff Fortenberry



Representative Jim Costa



Representative John Garamendi



Representative Kevin Cramer



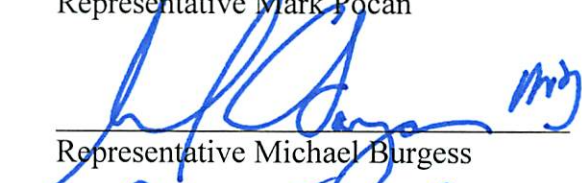
Representative Kristi Noem



Representative Mark Pocan



Representative Marsha Blackburn



Representative Michael Burgess



Representative Mike Conaway



Representative Mike Fitzpatrick




Representative Mike Rogers - AL



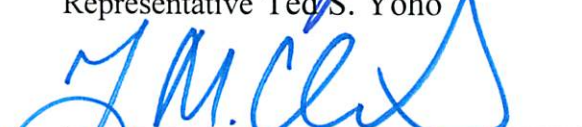
Representative Niki Tsongas


Representative Rick Nolan



Representative Scott Perry

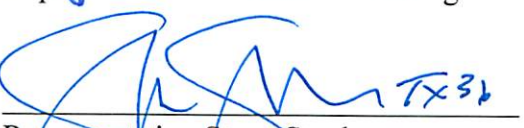

Representative Steve Stivers

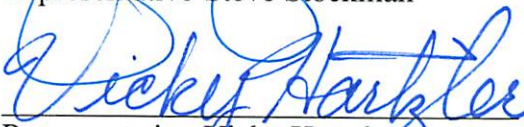

Representative Ted S. Yoho

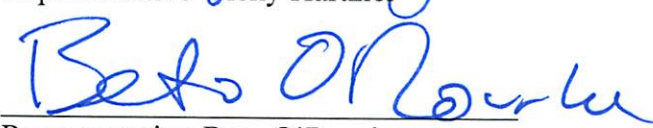

Representative Tom McClintock

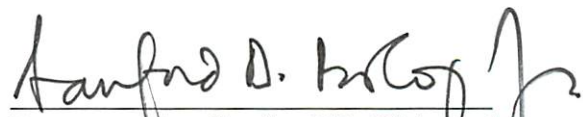

Representative Wm. Lacy Clay


Representative William R. Keating

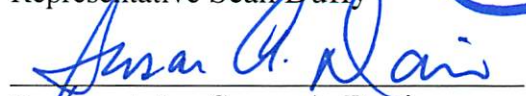

Representative Steve Stockman


Representative Vicky Hartzler


Representative Beto O'Rourke

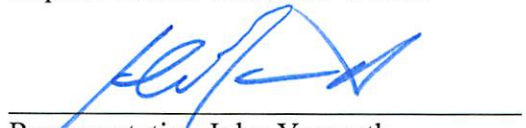

Representative Sanford D. Bishop, Jr


Representative Sean Duffy

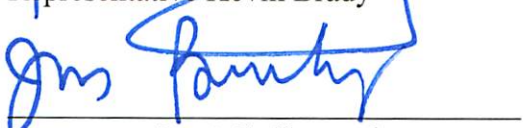

Representative Susan A. Davis


Representative Terri Sewell


Representative Frederica Wilson


Representative John Yarmuth


Representative Kevin Brady


Representative Julia Brownley


Representative Michael H. Michaud