

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20510**

April 17, 2014

The Honorable Joseph Kabila Kabange  
President  
Democratic Republic of the Congo  
Gombe, Kinshasa

The Honorable Augustin Matata Ponyo  
Prime Minister  
Democratic Republic of the Congo  
Gombe, Kinshasa

Dear President Kabila and Prime Minister Matata Ponyo:

The United States of America values its good relationship with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and is proud to have provided assistance to your government as you continue to confront ongoing challenges. Please know that the people of the United States remain steadfast in their respect for and commitment to the people of the DRC. It is in this spirit of goodwill and respect that we, the undersigned Members of the United States Congress, write to ask for your help in resolving the over 460 adoption cases of Congolese children who either have been adopted or are in the process of being adopted by American families, yet who are unable to obtain exit permits due to a recent DRC suspension.

We understand that your Government has elected to suspend the issuance of exit letters due to concerns about the health and wellbeing of adopted children. We respect DRC's right, and indeed your obligation to ensure that international adoptions of Congolese children are conducted with integrity, transparency and the highest of ethics. As U.S. lawmakers, we share your desire to see that all children living in the United States, including those born in the DRC, are safe and secure. To this end, we would like to offer to support your government in its efforts to ensure that adopted Congolese children are safe and well-cared for and that future intercountry adoptions between our countries continue to be conducted in an ethical, transparent manner.

While we work together to ensure that all Congolese children are protected, we hope you will consider allowing the hundreds of American families who have legally completed the adoption process to move forward. The unexpected delay in the completion of these adoptions has resulted in over 460 children continuing to languish in institutions without the care of a permanent family. As you know, long-term institutionalization has been proven to lead to neurological and emotional difficulties in children, as the lack of parental bonding damages brain development and a child's ability to form meaningful relationships with others.

In addition to the consequences for children, this suspension is also placing a substantial burden on the adoptive families. Approximately 50 of the 460 pending adoption cases are fully finalized—approved by Congolese courts, the Ministry of Gender and Family, and the United States Embassy in Kinshasa. The General Direction of Migration (DGM) has promised to consider applications for exit letters for completed adoption cases that had been approved by the Ministry of Gender and Family's Interministerial Adoption Committee before September 25, 2013. A number of families meeting that criterion are relying on the DGM's commitment to process their applications for exit permits. It is of great concern to us that these applications be completed as expeditiously as possible. Many

of these American families remain in Kinshasa, jeopardizing their careers and creating great financial difficulties. These families remain committed to the children they are adopting and desire to complete the process and return to the United States to raise these children in loving, caring homes.

More specifically, we respectfully request consideration of the following:

1. Allow for the expedited processing to completion of pending adoptions of children whose health is at risk.
2. Recommence exit permit issuance for families approved by the Ministry of Gender and Family's Interministerial Adoption Committee prior to September 25, 2013.
3. Provide the families who have finalized adoptions on or after September 25, 2013 with a means for obtaining exit permits.

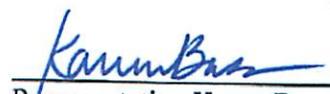
We thank you for your immediate attention to this important matter. We look forward to working with your Government to ensure both the continuation of international adoptions and the strengthening of our international adoption process. The children involved deserve nothing less.

With sincere respect,

  
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Senator Mary Landrieu  
Co-Chair, Congressional Coalition on Adoption

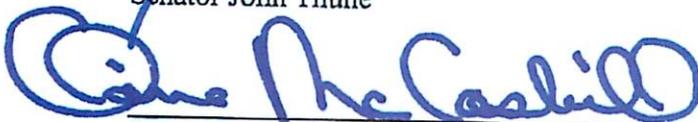
  
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Senator James Inhofe  
Co-Chair, Congressional Coalition on Adoption

  
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Representative Michele Bachmann  
Co-Chair, Congressional Coalition on Adoption

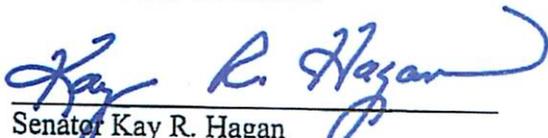
  
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Representative Karen Bass  
Co-Chair, Congressional Coalition on Adoption

  
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Senator John Thune

  
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Senator Tom Harkin

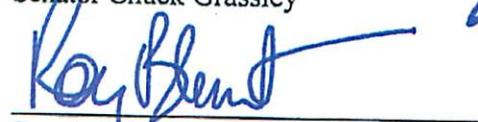
  
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Senator Claire McCaskill

  
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Senator Elizabeth Warren

  
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Senator Kay R. Hagan

  
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Senator Chuck Grassley

  
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Senator Richard Burr

  
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Senator Roy Blunt

*Sherrod Brown*

Senator Sherrod Brown

*Ted Cruz*

Senator Ted Cruz

*Debbie Stabenow*

Senator Debbie Stabenow

*Mike Enzi*

Senator Michael Enzi

*Barbara Boxer*

Senator Barbara Boxer

*Jack Reed*

Senator Jack Reed

*Jon Tester*

Senator Jon Tester

*John Boozman*

Senator John Boozman

*Dan Coats*

Senator Dan Coats

*Maria Cantwell*

Senator Maria Cantwell

*Kirsten Gillibrand*

Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

*David Vitter*

Senator David Vitter

*Pat Roberts*

Senator Pat Roberts

*Rand Paul*

Senator Rand Paul

*John Cornyn*

Senator John Cornyn

*Jerry Moran*

Senator Jerry Moran

*Dianne Feinstein*

Senator Dianne Feinstein

*Joe Donnelly*

Senator Joe Donnelly

*Mark Pryor*

Senator Mark Pryor

*Tom Coburn*

Senator Tom Coburn

*Lamar Alexander*

Senator Lamar Alexander

*Amy Klobuchar*

Senator Amy Klobuchar

*Mark Kirk*

Senator Mark Kirk

*Al Franken*

Senator Al Franken

Heidi Heitkamp  
Senator Heidi Heitkamp

Deb Fischer  
Senator Deb Fischer

Edward J. Markey  
Senator Ed Markey

Jeanne Shaheen  
Senator Jeanne Shaheen

Joe Manchin  
Senator Joe Manchin

John Barrasso  
Senator John Barrasso

John E. Walsh  
Senator John Walsh

Lisa Murkowski  
Senator Lisa Murkowski

Mark Begich  
Senator Mark Begich

Mark R. Warner  
Senator Mark R. Warner

Mark Udall  
Senator Mark Udall

Mike Johanns  
Senator Mike Johanns

Patty Murray  
Senator Patty Murray

Richard Blumenthal  
Senator Richard Blumenthal

Ron Johnson  
Senator Ron Johnson

Tammy Baldwin  
Senator Tammy Baldwin

Marco Rubio  
Senator Marco Rubio

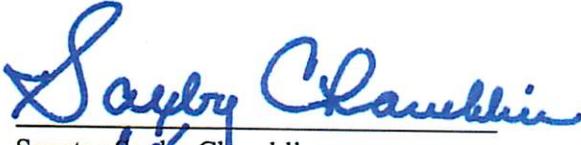
Tim Johnson  
Senator Tim Johnson

Rob Portman  
Senator Rob Portman

Carl Levin  
Senator Carl Levin

Bob Corker  
Senator Bob Corker

Jeffrey A. Merkley  
Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley



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Senator Christopher S. Murphy

Representative Collin C. Peterson

Representative Tom Graves

Representative Roger Williams

Representative André Carson

Representative Andy Barr

Representative Sam Farr

Representative Adam Smith

Representative Ann Wagner

Representative Tim Huelskamp

Representative Robert Aderholt



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Representative Reid Ribble

Representative Patrick T. McHenry

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Representative Bruce Braley

  
Representative Alcee L. Hastings

  
Representative Spencer Bachus

  
Representative George Holding

  
Representative Jim Cooper

  
Representative John F. Tierney

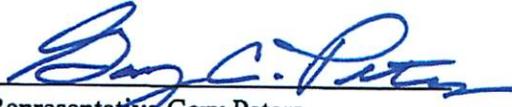
  
Representative Bill Huizenga

  
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Representative Charles Rangel

  
Representative Duncan Hunter

  
Representative Ed Royce

  
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Representative Jason Smith

  
Representative Jim Matheson

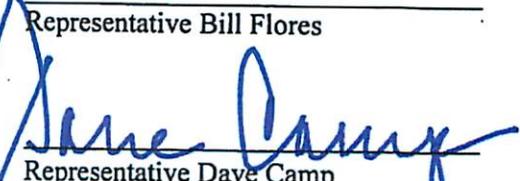
  
Representative John C. Fleming M.D.

  
Representative John Dingell

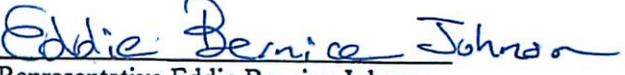
  
Representative John Shimkus

  
Representative Kevin Brady

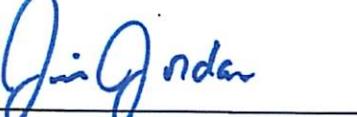
  
Representative Bill Flores

  
Representative Dave Camp

  
Representative Earl Blumenauer

  
Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson

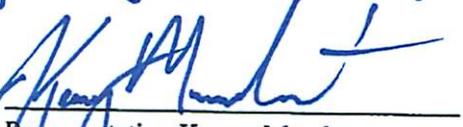
  
Representative George Miller

  
Representative Jim Jordan

  
Representative Jim Moran

  
Representative John Conyers, Jr.

  
Representative John J. Duncan, Jr.

  
Representative Kenny Marchant

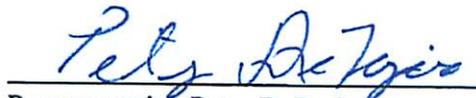
  
Representative Lamar Smith

  
Representative Lloyd Doggett

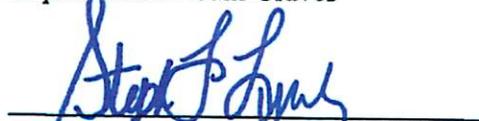
  
Representative Marc Veasey

  
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Representative Randy Neugebauer

  
Representative Sandy Levin

  
Representative Steve Cohen

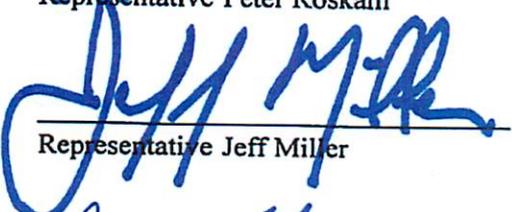
  
Representative Susan W. Brooks

  
Representative Suzanne Bonamici

  
Representative Tom Petri

  
Representative Blake Farenthold

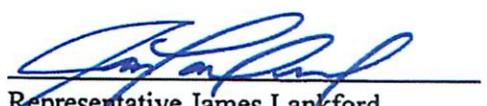
  
Representative Peter Roskam

  
Representative Jeff Miller

  
Representative Chuck Fleischmann

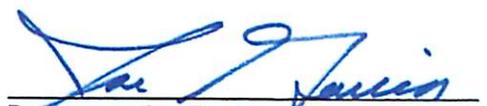
  
Representative Pete Olson

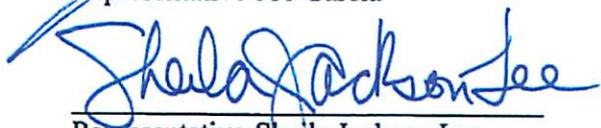
  
Representative Diane Black

  
Representative James Lankford

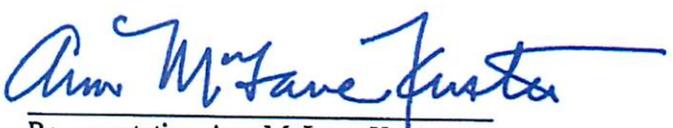
  
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Representative Todd Young

  
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Representative Scott Rigell

  
Representative Chris Smith