

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 28, 2014

Léon Kengo Wa Dondo
President, Senate
Palais du Peuple, Kinshasa

Aubin Minaku
Speaker, National Assembly

c/o Dr. Faïda Matifu
Ambassador to the United States
Democratic Republic of Congo
1726 M Street NW, Suite 601
Washington, DC 20036

Dear President Kengo and Speaker Minaku:

We the undersigned members of the United States (U.S.) Congress send greetings to you and the members of the National Assembly and the Senate. We value the good relationship between our two countries, and hope that the United States of America and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) will continue to work together on issues of mutual concern. As fellow legislators, we also understand and respect your commitment to serving the needs of the constituents you have been elected to represent.

We understand that your government has been engaged in a year-long process to strengthen your country's intercountry adoption process. We share your concern that this process be as protective of the children as possible. At the same time we recognize how vital it is for children living without the love and protection of a family to be placed with an appropriate family as quickly as possible. As Parliament considers the agenda for this legislative session, we ask that legislation to strengthen the adoption process be a top priority.

We are concerned about the welfare of the hundreds of Congolese children who have been legally adopted under Congolese law by U.S. citizens but who are unable to depart the DRC even though they possess valid visas to immediately enter the U.S. Some of these children have remained separated from their legal parents for over a year waiting for this final departure permission from the DRC. Tragically, some of these children have died while waiting for exit permission, and others are very ill and need immediate medical attention. We hope that you will agree that swift action is necessary to prevent further loss of innocent lives and the continued suffering and distress for the children and their legal parents.

We are aware of your concerns about the integrity of the DRC intercountry adoption process, and we respect your duty to discern how to protect the best interests of Congolese children. For this reason, we reiterate our April 17, 2014 offer to President Kabila and Prime Minister Ponyo to

support your government's efforts to follow up on the well-being of Congolese children adopted by U.S. citizens and to work together to ensure that intercountry adoptions between our countries continue to be conducted in an ethical, transparent manner.

As lawmakers, we wish to assure you that U.S. law protects all children in our country, regardless of their country of birth or citizenship. For example, for 40 years the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) has provided our states with support to improve their child protective services, ensuring that communities are able to prevent, assess and treat cases of child abuse and neglect. CAPTA sets high standards that have helped greatly in ensuring that all incidents of abuse or neglect are reported in a consistent manner and has enabled us to provide better protection and assistance to children experiencing abuse or neglect.

The U.S. Congress has also enacted many laws that prohibit trafficking, sexual abuse and exploitation of any children in the U.S., regardless of their country of birth. The laws also impose stiff penalties, up to life imprisonment or death, for those convicted of committing such horrible crimes. With respect to intercountry adoptions, Congress has passed two laws in the past 15 years which have strengthened our internal systems for overseeing and managing international adoption service providers. These two laws, the Intercountry Adoption Act (P.L. 106-279) and the Intercountry Adoption Universal Accreditation Act (P.L. 112-276), together require that all U.S. adoption service providers be accredited through a rigorous review process which holds them to high ethical and performance standards. These changes have resulted in a sharp decline in the number of adoption service providers because only those who meet these high standards are allowed to operate in the U.S.

In conclusion, we remain committed to ensuring that federal laws in the U.S. continue to protect all children against abuse and neglect, and to appropriately punish any persons who violate these laws. We respectfully request that the Congolese National Assembly and Senate prioritize legislation that strengthens the Congolese intercountry adoption process. This legislation would ensure that intercountry adoptions of Congolese children can be completed in an honest, ethical manner, and that the children who are currently waiting to be united with their legal parents can finally benefit from living with the security of a permanent, loving family.

Sincerely,


John Cornyn, United States Senator
Amy Klobuchar, United States Senator



Mitch McConnell, United States Senate
Minority Leader



John A. Boehner, U.S. Representative



Bob Corker, United States Senator



Robert Menendez, United States Senator



Edward R. Royce, U.S. Representative



Christopher H. Smith, U.S. Representative



Charles Grassley, United States Senator



Karen Bass, U.S. Representative



Lamar Alexander, United States Senator



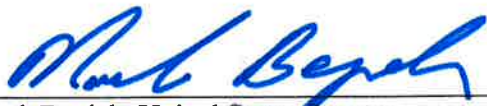
Kelly Ayotte, United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin, United States Senator



John Barrasso, M.D., United States Senator



Mark Begich, United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal, United States Senator



Roy Blunt, United States Senator



John Boozman, United States Senator



Barbara Boxer, United States Senator



Sherrod Brown, United States Senator



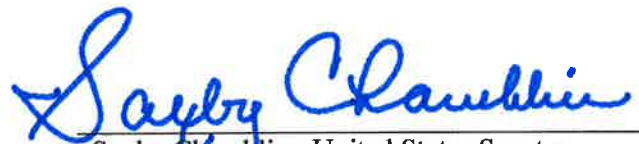
Richard Burr, United States Senator



Maria Cantwell, United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr. United States Senator




Saxby Chambliss, United States Senator



Dan Coats, United States Senator



Susan Collins, United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons, United States Senator



Mike Crapo, United States Senator

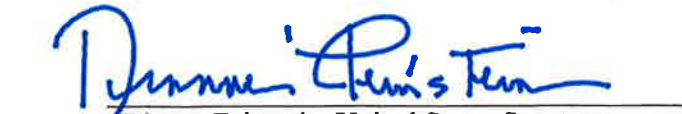


Ted Cruz, United States Senator



Joe Donnelly, United States Senator


Michael B. Enzi, United States Senator


Dianne Feinstein, United States Senator


Deb Fischer, United States Senator


Jeff Flake, United States Senator



Al Franken, United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand, United States Senator


Kay Hagan, United States Senator


Tom Harkin, United States Senator


Orrin Hatch, United States Senator


Heidi Heitkamp, United States Senator


Dean Heller, United States Senator


John Hoeven, United States Senator


James Inhofe, United States Senator


Johnny Isakson, United States Senator



Mike Johanns, United States Senator



Ron Johnson, United States Senator



Tim Johnson, United States Senator



Angus King, United States Senator



Mark Kirk, United States Senator



Mary Landrieu, United States Senator



Carl Levin, United States Senator



Joe Manchin, United States Senator



Edward J. Markey, United States Senator



Claire McCaskill, United States Senator



Jeff Merkley, United States Senator



Jerry Moran, United States Senator



Lisa Murkowski, United States Senator



Christopher Murphy, United States Senator



Patty Murray, United States Senator



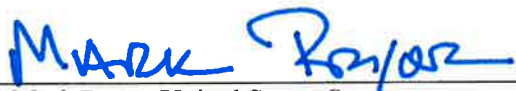
Bill Nelson, United States Senator



Rand Paul, M.D., United States Senator



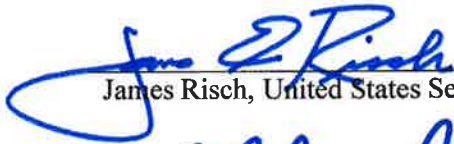
Rob Portman, United States Senator



Mark Pryor, United States Senator



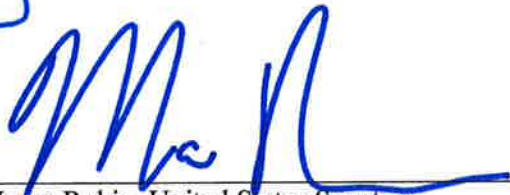
Jack Reed, United States Senator



James Risch, United States Senator



Pat Roberts, United States Senator



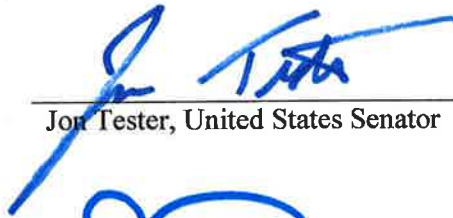
Marco Rubio, United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen, United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow, United States Senator



Jon Tester, United States Senator



John Thune, United States Senator



Pat Toomey, United States Senator


David Vitter, United States Senator


John Walsh, United States Senator


Mark Warner, United States Senator

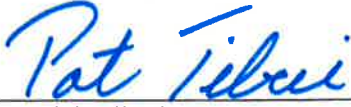

Elizabeth Warren, United States Senator


Sheldon Whitehouse, United States Senator


Roger Wicker, United States Senator


Ron Wyden, United States Senator


Tim Scott, United States Senator



Patrick Tiberi, U.S. Representative



Mike Pompeo, U.S. Representative



Cynthia M. Lummis, U.S. Representative



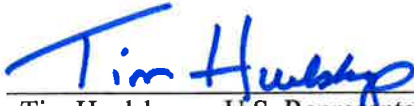
John J. Duncan, U.S. Representative



Bill Posey, U.S. Representative



Scott Perry, U.S. Representative



Tim Huelskamp, U.S. Representative



Jim Renacci, U.S. Representative



Michael T. McCaul, U.S. Representative



Ann McLane Kuster, U.S. Representative



Cathy McMorris Rodgers, U.S. Representative



Steve Daines, U.S. Representative



Marsha Blackburn, U.S. Representative



Robert Pittenger, U.S. Representative



James Lankford, U.S. Representative



Charles J. "Chuck" Fleischmann, U.S. Representative



Thomas Massie, U.S. Representative



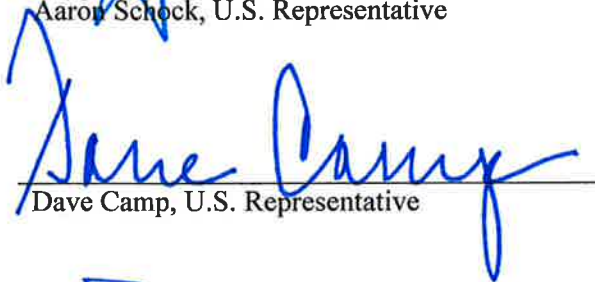
Suzan DelBene, U.S. Representative



Aaron Schock, U.S. Representative



Peter King, U.S. Representative



Dave Camp, U.S. Representative



Marc Veasey, U.S. Representative



Tom Cotton, U.S. Representative



Joyce Beatty, U.S. Representative



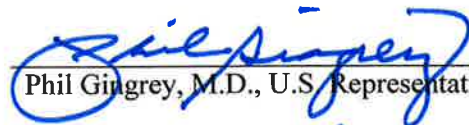
Tom McClintock, U.S. Representative



Ann Wagner, U.S. Representative



Suzanne Bonamici, U.S. Representative



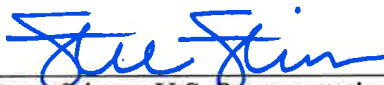
Phil Gingrey, M.D., U.S. Representative



George Holding, U.S. Representative



Austin Scott, U.S. Representative



Steve Stivers, U.S. Representative



Vicky Hartzler, U.S. Representative



Kay Granger, U.S. Representative

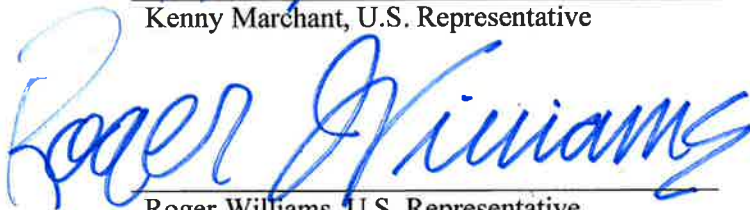

Bill Flores, U.S. Representative


Kevin Cramer, U.S. Representative


Jim McDermott, U.S. Representative


Kenny Marchant, U.S. Representative


Stephen Fincher, U.S. Representative


Roger Williams, U.S. Representative


Sam Farr, U.S. Representative


Dave Reichert, U.S. Representative


Jaime Herrera Beutler, U.S. Representative



Sean P. Duffy, U.S. Representative


Bill Huizenga, U.S. Representative


Brad Wenstrup, U.S. Representative


Tim Griffin, U.S. Representative


Paul Ryan, U.S. Representative

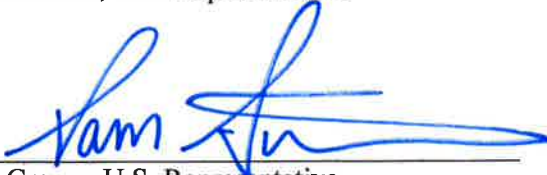

Jim Costa, U.S. Representative



Luke Messer, U.S. Representative



Chellie Pingree, U.S. Representative



Sam Graves, U.S. Representative



Alan Nunnelee, U.S. Representative



Andy Barr, U.S. Representative



John Larson, U.S. Representative



Susan Brooks, U.S. Representative



Reid Ribble, U.S. Representative



Jeff Fortenberry, U.S. Representative



Mark Meadows, U.S. Representative



Susan A. Davis, U.S. Representative



Diane Black, U.S. Representative



Billy Long, U.S. Representative




Chris Van Hollen, U.S. Representative



Michael M. Honda, U.S. Representative



Beto O'Rourke, U.S. Representative



Mike Michaud, U.S. Representative



Marlin Stutzman, U.S. Representative



Collin C. Peterson, U.S. Representative



Rick Larsen, U.S. Representative



Stephen F. Lynch, U.S. Representative



Peter DeFazio, U.S. Representative



Greg Walden, U.S. Representative



Ed Whitfield, U.S. Representative




Howard Coble, U.S. Representative



Jason Smith, U.S. Representative



Pete Sessions, U.S. Representative



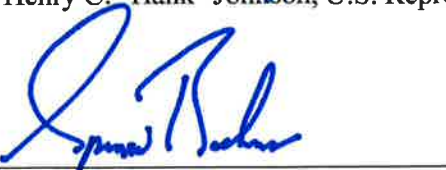
John Tierney, U.S. Representative



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, U.S. Representative



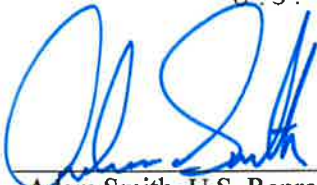
Keith Ellison, U.S. Representative



Spencer Bachus, U.S. Representative



James P. Moran, U.S. Representative



Adam Smith, U.S. Representative



Lee Terry, U.S. Representative



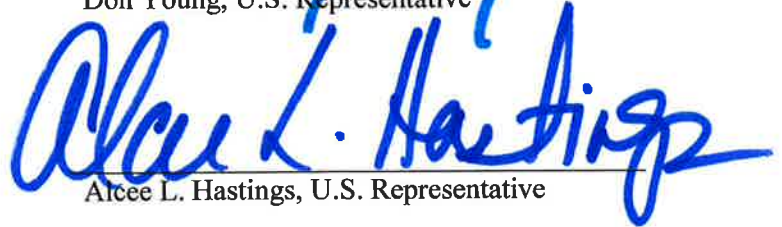
Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, U.S.
Representative



Don Young, U.S. Representative



Patrick McHenry, U.S. Representative



Alcee L. Hastings, U.S. Representative



Charles Rangel, U.S. Representative



Jack Kingston, U.S. Representative



Mike Fitzpatrick, U.S. Representative



David Jolly, U.S. Representative



Lamar Smith, U.S. Representative



Adam Schiff, U.S. Representative



Michele Bachmann, U.S. Representative



Mike McIntyre, U.S. Representative



Sanford Bishop, U.S. Representative



Trent Franks, U.S. Representative




John Kline, U.S. Representative



Blaine Luetkemeyer, U.S. Representative




Richard Nolan, U.S. Representative



F. James Sensenbrenner Jr., U.S.
Representative



John Shimkus, U.S. Representative



Andre Carson, U.S. Representative



Eddie Bernice Johnson, U.S. Representative

Signatures of Members of United States Congress

United States Senate

Lamar Alexander, United States Senator
Kelly Ayotte, United States Senator
Tammy Baldwin, United States Senator
John Barrasso, M.D., United States Senator
Mark Begich, United States Senator
Richard Blumenthal, United States Senator
Roy Blunt, United States Senator
John Boozman, United States Senator
Barbara Boxer, United States Senator
Sherrod Brown, United States Senator
Richard Burr, United States Senator
Maria Cantwell, United States Senator
Robert P. Casey, Jr. United States Senator
Saxby Chambliss, United States Senator
Dan Coats, United States Senator
Susan Collins, United States Senator
Christopher A. Coons, United States Senator
Bob Corker, United States Senator
John Cornyn, United States Senator
Mike Crapo, United States Senator
Ted Cruz, United States Senator
Joe Donnelly, United States Senator
Michael B. Enzi, United States Senator
Dianne Feinstein, United States Senator
Deb Fischer, United States Senator
Jeff Flake, United States Senator
Al Franken, United States Senator
Kirsten Gillibrand, United States Senator
Charles Grassley, United States Senator
Kay Hagan, United States Senator
Tom Harkin, United States Senator
Orrin Hatch, United States Senator
Heidi Heitkamp, United States Senator
Dean Heller, United States Senator
John Hoeven, United States Senator
James Inhofe, United States Senator
Johnny Isakson, United States Senator
Mike Johanns, United States Senator
Ron Johnson, United States Senator
Tim Johnson, United States Senator
Angus King, United States Senator
Mark Kirk, United States Senator
Amy Klobuchar, United States Senator
Mary Landrieu, United States Senator
Carl Levin, United States Senator
Joe Manchin, United States Senator
Edward J. Markey, United States Senator
Claire McCaskill, United States Senator

Mitch McConnell, United States Senate
Minority Leader
Robert Menendez, United States Senator
Jeff Merkley, United States Senator
Jerry Moran, United States Senator
Lisa Murkowski, United States Senator
Christopher Murphy, United States Senator
Patty Murray, United States Senator
Bill Nelson, United States Senator
Rand Paul, M.D., United States Senator
Rob Portman, United States Senator
Mark Pryor, United States Senator
Jack Reed, United States Senator
James Risch, United States Senator
Pat Roberts, United States Senator
Marco Rubio, United States Senator
Tim Scott, United States Senator
Jeanne Shaheen, United States Senator
Debbie Stabenow, United States Senator
Jon Tester, United States Senator
John Thune, United States Senator
Pat Toomey, United States Senator
David Vitter, United States Senator
John Walsh, United States Senator
Mark Warner, United States Senator
Elizabeth Warren, United States Senator
Sheldon Whitehouse, United States Senator
Roger Wicker, United States Senator
Ron Wyden, United States Senator

United States House of Representatives

Michele Bachmann, U.S. Representative
Spencer Bachus, U.S. Representative
Andy Barr, U.S. Representative
Karen Bass, U.S. Representative
Joyce Beatty, U.S. Representative
Sanford Bishop, U.S. Representative
Diane Black, U.S. Representative
Marsha Blackburn, U.S. Representative
John A. Boehner, U.S. Representative
Suzanne Bonamici, U.S. Representative
Susan Brooks, U.S. Representative
Dave Camp, U.S. Representative
Andre Carson, U.S. Representative
Howard Coble, U.S. Representative
Jim Costa, U.S. Representative
Tom Cotton, U.S. Representative
Kevin Cramer, U.S. Representative
Steve Daines, U.S. Representative

Susan A. Davis, U.S. Representative
 Peter DeFazio, U.S. Representative
 Suzan DelBene, U.S. Representative
 Sean P. Duffy, U.S. Representative
 John J. Duncan, U.S. Representative
 Keith Ellison, U.S. Representative
 Sam Farr, U.S. Representative
 Stephen Fincher, U.S. Representative
 Mike Fitzpatrick, U.S. Representative
 Charles J. "Chuck" Fleischmann, U.S. Representative
 Bill Flores, U.S. Representative
 Jeff Fortenberry, U.S. Representative
 Trent Franks, U.S. Representative
 Phil Gingrey, M.D., U.S. Representative
 Kay Granger, U.S. Representative
 Sam Graves, U.S. Representative
 Tim Griffin, U.S. Representative
 Vicky Hartzler, U.S. Representative
 Alcee L. Hastings, U.S. Representative
 Jaime Herrera Beutler, U.S. Representative
 George Holding, U.S. Representative
 Michael M. Honda, U.S. Representative
 Tim Huelskamp, U.S. Representative
 Bill Huizenga, U.S. Representative
 Eddie Bernice Johnson, U.S. Representative
 Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, U.S. Representative
 David Jolly, U.S. Representative
 Peter King, U.S. Representative
 Jack Kingston, U.S. Representative
 John Kline, U.S. Representative
 Ann McLane Kuster, U.S. Representative
 James Lankford, U.S. Representative
 Rick Larsen, U.S. Representative
 John Larson, U.S. Representative
 Billy Long, U.S. Representative
 Blaine Luetkemeyer, U.S. Representative
 Cynthia M. Lummis, U.S. Representative
 Stephen F. Lynch, U.S. Representative
 Kenny Marchant, U.S. Representative
 Thomas Massie, U.S. Representative
 Michael T. McCaul, U.S. Representative
 Tom McClintock, U.S. Representative
 Jim McDermott, U.S. Representative
 Patrick McHenry, U.S. Representative
 Mike McIntyre, U.S. Representative
 Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, U.S. Representative
 Cathy McMorris Rodgers, U.S. Representative
 Mark Meadows, U.S. Representative
 Luke Messer, U.S. Representative

Mike Michaud, U.S. Representative
 James P. Moran, U.S. Representative
 Richard Nolan, U.S. Representative
 Alan Nunnelee, U.S. Representative
 Beto O'Rourke, U.S. Representative
 Scott Perry, U.S. Representative
 Collin C. Peterson, U.S. Representative
 Chellie Pingree, U.S. Representative
 Robert Pittenger, U.S. Representative
 Mike Pompeo, U.S. Representative
 Bill Posey, U.S. Representative
 Charles Rangel, U.S. Representative
 Dave Reichert, U.S. Representative
 Jim Renacci, U.S. Representative
 Reid Ribble, U.S. Representative
 Edward R. Royce, U.S. Representative
 Paul Ryan, U.S. Representative
 Adam Schiff, U.S. Representative
 Aaron Schock, U.S. Representative
 Austin Scott, U.S. Representative
 F. James Jr. Sensenbrenner, U.S. Representative
 Pete Sessions, U.S. Representative
 John Shimkus, U.S. Representative
 Adam Smith, U.S. Representative
 Christopher H. Smith, U.S. Representative
 Jason Smith, U.S. Representative
 Lamar Smith, U.S. Representative
 Steve Stivers, U.S. Representative
 Marlin Stutzman, U.S. Representative
 Lee Terry, U.S. Representative
 Patrick Tiberi, U.S. Representative
 John Tierney, U.S. Representative
 Chris Van Hollen, U.S. Representative
 Marc Veasey, U.S. Representative
 Ann Wagner, U.S. Representative
 Greg Walden, U.S. Representative
 Brad Wenstrup, U.S. Representative
 Ed Whitfield, U.S. Representative
 Roger Williams, U.S. Representative
 Don Young, U.S. Representative