



ERLC Supports the Adoptee Citizenship Act

The ERLC affirms that adoption is a central theological theme in the Bible that provides practical application in our families and communities. We ourselves have been adopted into the family of God, and Scripture provides many instances of God's tender care for the orphan and vulnerable child, and urges His followers to do the same. (James 1:27, Psalm 68:5-6, Isaiah 1:17).

In a world full of children in need, inter-country adoption is an essential measure of the Christian faith. For many children in orphanages in foreign countries, their only opportunity for growing up in a safe and loving family is to be adopted internationally. When an adoption is finalized, the adoptee is treated by the law as if he or she had been born to the adoptive parents, and the adoptee should receive the same rights and privileges as natural born children.

Prior to the Child Citizenship Act of 2000, the administrative steps required of families adopting internationally were unnecessarily burdensome. The process included applying for and moving through a lengthy naturalization process for their children, in addition to the lengthy and costly adoption process. The Child Citizenship Act of 2000 granted automatic citizenship to all foreign-born children brought to the United States, who had at least one parent who was a U.S. Citizen. Unfortunately, that Act only applied to adoptees under the age of 18 when the bill was enacted, leaving an entire population of adopted children without full U.S. citizenship.

The Adoptee Citizenship Act closes the loophole to provide immediate citizenship to these children already adopted by U.S. citizens yet left out of the previous bill. This bill solves the innumerable problems these adopted Americans have had to endure in attending college, accessing banking services, or starting their careers because of a lack of a citizenship. This bill provides equity to these children who should have every legal right of any other child of a U.S. citizen.

Adopting from other countries is a privilege, not a right. The United States should respect sending countries by quickly securing permanent citizenship for the thousands of adoptees who do not currently have citizenship.

The ERLC strongly urges Congress to pass the bipartisan Adoptee Citizenship Act to provide a permanent legal remedy for the thousands of sons and daughters of U.S. citizens who were left in the gap of uncertainty.
