



THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY COMMISSION
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

April 29, 2020

Leader Mitch McConnell
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Speaker Nancy Pelosi
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Minority Leader Charles Schumer
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

We are a diverse group of leaders representing a broad range of institutions that serve communities around the country and around the world. We are writing to bring your attention to a common-sense bill that ensures adopted individuals are treated as equal to biological individuals under U.S. law.

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 individuals 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 because of their lack of legal immigration status. This has included challenges in attending college, accessing banking services, or starting their careers

This bipartisan bill ensures that individuals, who were adopted by a U.S. citizen before they reached 18 years of age receive citizenship. Adopting from other countries is a privilege. Not every nation chooses

to participate in intercountry adoption, and the United States should respect the countries that do choose to participate, by quickly securing permanent citizenship for the thousands of adoptees who do not currently have citizenship.

We strongly urge 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 behind and not granted American citizenship.

We thank you for your commitment to adoptees, and we look forward to working with you on this important bill.

Respectfully,

Russell Moore
President
Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty
Commission

Joy Alessi
Director
Adoptee Rights Campaign

Scott Arbeiter
President
World Relief

Kurt Capelli
Co-Founder
Family Coalition for Adoptee Citizenship

Susan Cox
Vice President
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National President
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James R. Fisher
Executive Director
Korean War Veterans Memorial Foundation

Kristie De Peña
VP of Policy, Dir. of Immigration
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Shirley V. Hoogstra
President
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities

Laura Jeon
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Korean American Federation of Los Angeles

Chuck Johnson
President and CEO
National Council for Adoption

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Brian Kim
President
Korean American Civic Empowerment and
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Tammy Kim
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Korean American Center / Korean Community
Services

Walter Kim
President
National Association of Evangelicals

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Chris Palusky
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