



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 17, 2013

His Excellency Vladimir Putin  
President of the Russian Federation  
Moscow, Russia

Excellency:

We write to you today out of concern that the recent Dima Yakovlev Law may be applied to American-Russian adoptions already in process in Russia, causing the orphans to experience abandonment once again and depriving them of the home environment needed by every child. As you know, the human instinct for compassion and for acting in the best interest of children knows no national boundaries. Loving adoptive parents who search for orphans—including special needs orphans with Down's Syndrome and HIV—exist in every country, but are vastly outnumbered by the orphans in need of parents. A number of American families have offered Russian children immediate homes and we strongly hope for the completion of those adoptions already initiated.

Many of the children potentially affected by the Yakovlev Law last saw their American adoptive parents just weeks or months ago and were left with hugs, kisses, and the promise that their new parents would be coming to take them home soon. Orphans need to be in families as soon as possible. Child development experts indicate that for every month a child spends in institutional care, the child's development is delayed by three months. For orphans with special needs who require expensive surgeries in the early years of their lives in order to survive, delay in adoption could be deadly. As time is of the essence, we urge you to exempt from the Yakovlev Law those orphans and American families who already have initiated the adoption process.

Russia, the United States, and the international community stand united against child abuse and child neglect. Russia and the United States have the opportunity to work together to ensure that children—including special needs children—are moved from institutional care to family care. We hope that the freeze on new adoptions will be short and that Russia will rejoin the July 2011 bilateral agreement on adoption that was negotiated in response to Russia's concerns regarding orphan's best interest following the Dima Yakovlev tragedy. Most of all, we respectfully request that the Yakovlev Law not be applied to the children who have an immediate opportunity to join loving families in the United States.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



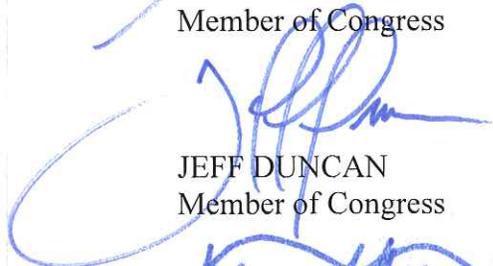
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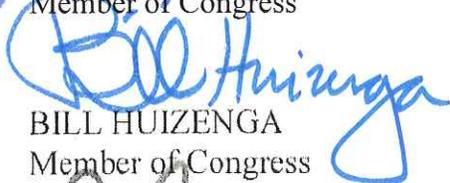
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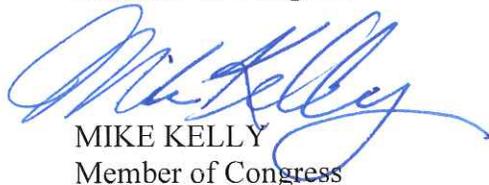
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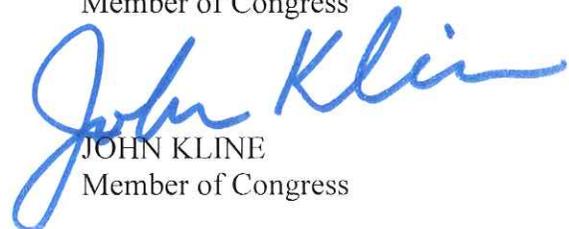
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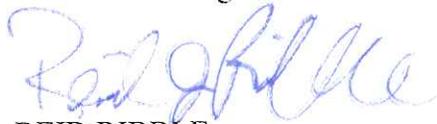
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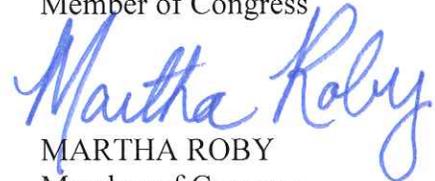
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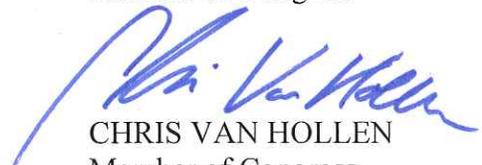
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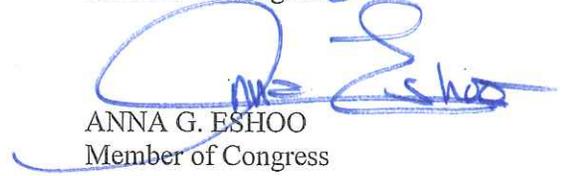
  
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