



October 29, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler
Chairman
House Committee on the Judiciary
House of Representatives
2132 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim Jordan
Ranking Member
House Committee on the Judiciary
House of Representatives
2056 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Chairman Nadler, & Ranking Member Jordan:

We, the undersigned organizations, urge you to bring H.R. 2731, The Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019 to a vote before the end of the 116th Congress.

H.R. 2731, the Adoptee Citizenship Act, closes the loophole in the Child Citizenship Act of 2000 that left the adopted children of thousands of Americans without citizenship. These children, who are now adults, have grown up without the protections intended by virtue of American adoption law. Adoptees without citizenship in the United States live in fear of separation from their families and the only home they have ever known. Increased security measures prevent many from receiving government identification and accessing employment, health care, and other vital benefits. An unknown number of American adoptees have already been deported as a result of this loophole. (João Herbert, an adoptee who was deported at 22 to Brazil, was murdered in Brazil in 2004.) Adoptees who are returned to their birth countries suffer language and culture differences, and in many cases, are denied legal status as a result of their American adoptions. In other words, adoptees who never received US citizenship often become stateless after deportation.

Over the last twenty years, multiple attempts to correct the technical loophole in the Child Citizenship Act have failed. However, bipartisan support for the Adoptee Citizenship Act remains steady. Currently, ninety-two of your colleagues (61 Democrats and 31 Republicans) have pledged their support and are prepared to vote in favor of passage. On Sept. 23, 2020, a coalition of organizations urged the House Subcommittee on Immigration and Citizenship to include disenfranchised adoptees among the vulnerable population of essential workers affected by COVID.



Passing a clean Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019 is also critical to the family members of adoptees. It would allow adoptees like Anissa, a deported adoptee and Adoptees For Justice board member, to reunite with her daughter after 14 years of separation. When testifying at a congressional briefing in September 2019, her daughter Vanessa shared:

With my mother being deported to Jamaica when I was 12, I feel anxious at all times, wondering if something bad could happen to her while I'm thousands of miles away, helpless... I want her to be here with her family where she belongs.

Anissa, Vanessa, and the larger adoptee community have been waiting 20 years after passage of the Child Citizenship Act of 2000 for a bill that includes all adoptees—including individuals who were adopted on all valid visas, deported adoptees, and those with orders of deportation. Given the daily reality of their lives, impacted adoptees, deportees, and their loved ones cannot afford to wait anymore. As immigrants, people of color, Asian Americans, adoptees, and allies, we urge you to do everything in your power to ensure the passage of a clean Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019 before the end of this year.

Sincerely,

National Organizations:

Adoptees for Justice
18 Million Rising
AAJIL (Asian American Innovation + Justice Lab)
Adoptee Rights Campaign (ARC)
Adoptees Connect, Inc.
Adoptees United Inc.
Adoption Search Resource Connection
African Communities Together (ACT)
Alianza Americas
Alianza Nacional de Campesinas
Amazin LeThi Foundation
American Friends Service Committee
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC
Asian and Pacific Islander American Vote (APIAVote)
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
Bastard Nation: the Adoptee Rights Organization
Bend the Arc: Jewish Action
Beteseb Felega - Ethiopian Adoption Connection
Black Alliance for Just Immigration



CASA

Casa de Esperanza: National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities

CASA in Action (Pennsylvania, Maryland, & Virginia)

Center for Popular Democracy

CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers

Child Welfare League of America

Christian Reformed Church Office of Social Justice

Church World Service

Coalition on Human Needs

Community Change Action

Creating a Family, the national adoption and foster care education and support nonprofit

Detention Watch Network

Disciples Immigration Legal Counsel

Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries

Dreamers Community Church

East Coast Asian American Student Union (ECAASU)

Education for Social Justice Foundation

Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)

Faith and Community Empowerment

Families with Children from China New England (FCCNE)

Family Coalition for Adoptee Citizenship

FIRM Action

First Focus on Children

Food Empowerment Project

FORGE, Inc.

Hispanic Federation

International Child Search Alliance

International Korean Adoptee Associations

Japanese American Citizens League

Korean American Coalition

Lights for Liberty

MAASU (Midwest Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Students Union)

MidWest Mixed

Musings of the Lame

NALEO Educational Fund

Nanchang Project

NAPABA

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd



National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Coalition of Adoptee Equality
National Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans (NCAPA)
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Forum
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild (NIPNLG)
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC)
National Korean American Service & Education Consortium (NAKASEC) Action Fund
National Network for Immigrant & Refugee Rights
National Partnership for New Americans
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC)
NQAPIA
OCA - Asian Pacific American Advocates
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
The Rhizome Center for Migrants
U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants
UndocuBlack Network
United We Dream
Visual Communications Media
Woodhull Freedom Foundation

California Organizations:

APIENC (API Equality - Northern California)
Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Los Angeles
Cross Cultural Adoptee Mentorship Program (C-CAMP)
Equality California
Families with Children from China Southern California
Pact, An Adoption Alliance
Services, Immigrant Rights & Education Network (SIREN)
SURJ Marin - Showing Up for Racial Justice

New York Organizations:

Adoptees Connect, Buffalo
Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York



Also-Known-As

Cross Cultural Adoptee Mentorship Program (C-CAMP)
Families with Children from China of Greater New York
Make the Road New York
MinKwon Center for Community Action
NAPAWF*NYC
New York Adoptee Rights Coalition (NYARC)
New York Immigration Coalition
The Second Presbyterian Church, New York City

Ohio Organizations:

Adoption Network Cleveland
Adoption Perspectives, LLC
Asian Services In Action (ASIA)
Coalition of Adoptive Families (COFAF)
Ohio Asian American Health Coalition
Ohio Birthparents Group
Ohio Immigrant Alliance
OPAWL
Transracial Adoptees at Ohio State

Other State & Local Organizations:

ACLU Alabama
Adoptee Hub
Adoptees Connect - Philadelphia
Adoptees Connect - PVD
Adoption Rhode Island
Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education
Ann Kim Md Pc
Asian Adult Adoptees of Washington
Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago
Asian Americans Advancing Justice- Atlanta
Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO)
Asian Pacific Islander Coalition
Boston Korean Adoptees
Brown Asian Sisters Empowered (BASE)
CCJC



Chicago Jesus-Love Korean UMC
Chicago Joyful Community Church
Chicago Sanctuary Church Network
Chinese Children Adoption International
Coalición de Derechos Humanos
Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community
Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL)
Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition
Colorado People's Alliance
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
Dreamers Community Church
Enlace Chicago
Equality North Carolina
Equity in Education Coalition
Faith Communities Organizing for Sanctuary
Farmworker Association of Florida
Florida Immigrant Coalition
H-CAN (Havertown-Area Community Action Network) Immigration and Refugee Action Group
HANA Center
Hanul Family Alliance
Heavenswill church
Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights
Japanese American Service Committee
KAN-WIN
Korean American Coalition of Chicago
Make the Road Pennsylvania
Mayor's Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs (Philadelphia)
Michigan Open Access
MIRA Coalition
NAKASEC Virginia
North Carolina Asian Americans Together
NOVA Friends of Refugees
One In Christ Episcopal Church
OneAmerica
Organized Communities Against Deportations OCAD
Paz Promise Arizona
Pennsylvania Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs
Pennsylvania Immigration & Citizenship Coalition



Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Rhode Island First Korean Church
Schaumburg Alliance Church
Silver State Equality-Nevada
Somos Un Pueblo Unido
Sunflower Community Action
Taste of Korea Chicago Festival
Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
The Park Adoption Community Center
Truth in Immigration Project
Vietnamese Association of Illinois
Virginia Coalition for Immigrant Rights
Voces de la Frontera
Woori Center
Yeondae