

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 5, 2009

The Honorable Cristian Diaconescu
Aleea Alexandru nr. 31,
Sector 1, București, cod 011822

Dear Mr. Foreign Minister:

As you well know, the relations between the United States and Romania have become increasingly strong over the past decade and we look forward to continuing to strengthen the ties between our two nations in decades to come. One area that has and will continue to be of great importance to us and the 215 Members of Congressional Coalition on Adoption is the safety and well being of Romania's children. We applaud the Government of Romania's work to prevent the abandonment of children and offer our continued support of your concerted efforts to move away from the use of institutionalization.

That being said, we remain concerned that according to your own estimates 86,000 children remain in state care. We strongly believe that the best interests of these children can only be served through policies and programs aimed at either timely reunifying them with their birth family when safe and appropriate or connecting them with a safe, loving and permanent family through safe and viable kinship and guardianship care, or domestic and international adoption. Interventions such as foster and day care are meant to serve as temporary measures while permanent placements can be secured. They are not and should not be relied on as long term alternatives to biological or adoptive parental care.

To this end, we urge you to reform current law in Romania to more fully promote and support permanent parental care for children. This reform process must include a reevaluation of your decision to remove international adoption as an important permanency option for children who cannot find permanent homes in Romania. While child welfare reform legislation was passed in 2004, it is widely agreed that the new law creates additional issues for abandoned children and as noted above, eliminates inter-country adoption as a permanency option. We continue to support your goal of developing a reformed system for international adoption, but the delay in reform should not occur at the expense of children already matched with adoptive families in the United States or elsewhere.

Please know that Romania is not the only nation faced with the challenge of securing a brighter future for its orphaned children. In the United States, approximately 60,000 foster children are still in need of a permanent family to call their own. Because U.S. law remains focused on the best interests of the individual child, these children are allowed to be adopted outside when appropriate. As U.S. lawmakers, we are committed to doing what we can to remove barriers that hinder U.S. children from realizing their basic right to a family. We welcome your leadership in securing this same right the children of Romania and the world.

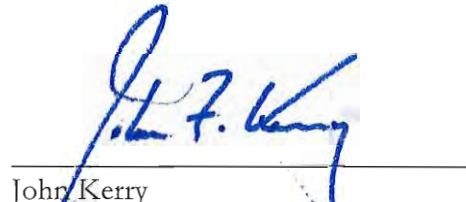
Sincerely,



Mary Landrieu
United States Senator




James Inhofe
United States Senator



John Kerry
United States Senator




Richard Burr
United States Senator




Carl Levin
United States Senator



Joseph Lieberman
United States Senator



Christopher Dodd
United States Senator



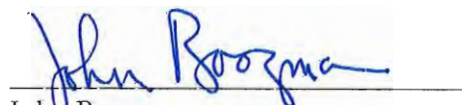
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Member of Congress



Dennis Moore
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Jim Himes
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Barney Frank
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Jim Oberstar
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Chris Smith
Member of Congress



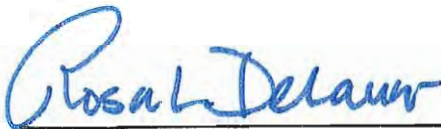
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