



For Immediate Release

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Rep. Pitts Applauds New Adoption Rule

New Rule Will Keep Families from Having to Start Adoption Process Over

Washington— Congressman Joe Pitts (PA-16) today praised the decision by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to allow parents who began the adoption process prior to April 1, 2008, to continue moving forward without starting over. Rep. Pitts had urged USCIS to make this important change. Due to unforeseen delays in international adoptions, if a change in the USCIS policy had not been made, families who had begun the application for adoption before full enactment of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of International Adoption (Hague Adoption Convention) would have been forced to start the long process over again and re-apply under the Hague approved process.

Congressman Pitts' statement follows:

“I am very pleased by this decision from USCIS that will allow parents to continue moving forward in their efforts to adopt children who need loving homes. I had pushed USCIS to come to a decision like this that will keep U.S. policy compliant with the Hague Convention without forcing families to start the process over from the beginning. The process for international adoption is long and complicated and many families have been acting in good faith to be compliant with the requirements.

“I want to thank the Joint Council on International Children’s Services for all of their help in getting this policy change implemented. This will benefit both the families in America, and the children they seek to adopt by keeping the process moving forward.”

Background

USCIS has announced that prospective adoptive parents already in the process of adopting a child from a country that has implemented the Hague Adoption Convention who filed a Form I-600A, Application for Advance Processing of Orphan Petition, prior to April 1, 2008, and who have received the one time no-charge extension, may file one additional Form I-600A, and continue to proceed with their intercountry adoption through the “orphan” process.

Depending on the time that it takes prospective adoptive parents to be matched with a child and file Form I-600, the approval of the I-600A might expire before the prospective adoptive parents are able to file Form I-600. By allowing the filing of one new Form I-600A prior to the expiration of the current approved Form I-600A, USCIS is allowing prospective adoptive parents who have been grandfathered into the pre-Hague Adoption Convention process to continue to proceed under this “orphan” process, provided the child’s home country agrees.

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