

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Expressing the deep disappointment of the Senate in the enactment by the Russia Government of a law ending inter-country adoptions of Russian children by United States citizens and urging the Russia Government to reconsider the law and prioritize the processing of inter-country adoptions involving parentless Russian children who were already matched with United States families before the enactment of the law.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. LANDRIEU (for herself and Mr. BLUNT) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Expressing the deep disappointment of the Senate in the enactment by the Russia Government of a law ending inter-country adoptions of Russian children by United States citizens and urging the Russia Government to reconsider the law and prioritize the processing of inter-country adoptions involving parentless Russian children who were already matched with United States families before the enactment of the law.

Whereas United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that there are 740,000 children in Russia living without parental care;

Whereas the Ministry of Science and Education of Russia estimates that 110,000 children live in state institutions in Russia;

Whereas the number of adoptions by Russian families is modest, with only 7,400 domestic adoptions in 2011 compared with 3,400 adoptions of Russian children by families abroad;

Whereas on December 28, 2012, Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin signed into law legislation entitled “On Measures Concerning the Implementation of Government Policy on Orphaned Children and those without Parental Care”, which includes language that permanently bans adoptions of Russian children by United States citizens;

Whereas a spokesman for President Putin, Dmitry Peskov, announced that the law is to take effect on January 1, 2013, thereby abrogating the bilateral agreement between Russia and the United States that entered into force on November 1, 2012, and requires both countries to provide one year notice of intent to terminate the agreement;

Whereas 46, and possibly more, inter-country adoptions of Russian children by United States families have already received a final adoption decree from the Russia judicial system, and hundreds of other United States families are in the process of adopting Russian children;

Whereas United Nations Children’s Fund released a statement urging the Russia Government to ensure that “the current plight of the many Russian children in institutions receives priority attention” and that the Russia Government consider alternatives to institutionalization

including “domestic adoption and inter-country adoption”;

Whereas the United Nations, the Hague Conference on Private International Law, and other international organizations have recognized a child’s right to a family as a basic human right worthy of protection;

Whereas the Christian Alliance for Orphans reports that United States families have opened their homes to more than 179,000 orphans from overseas in the last 20 years;

Whereas after China and Ethiopia, Russia is the third most popular country for United States citizens who adopt internationally;

Whereas adoption, both domestic and international, is an important child protection tool and an integral part of child welfare best practices around the world, along with prevention of abandonment and family reunification: and

Whereas more than 60,000 Russia-born children have found safe, permanent, and loving homes with United States families over the last two decades: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) affirms that all children deserve a permanent, protective family;

3 (2) values the long tradition of the United
4 States and Russia Governments working together to
5 find permanent homes for unparented children;

6 (3) disapproves of the Russia law ending inter-
7 country adoptions of Russian children by United
8

1 States citizens because it primarily harms vulnerable
2 and voiceless children; and

3 (4) strongly urges the Russia Government to
4 reconsider the law on humanitarian grounds, in con-
5 sideration of the well-being of parentless Russian
6 children awaiting a loving and permanent family,
7 and prioritize the processing of inter-country adop-
8 tions of Russian children by United States citizens
9 that were initiated before the enactment of the law.