

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 17, 2013

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry,

I write to request your assistance in finding a solution for the small number of Russian orphans who were in the final stages of being adopted by American families when the Russian adoption ban went into effect in January. Earlier this week, I spearheaded a letter from the entire Ohio Congressional Delegation to President Obama asking that he prioritize this issue and seek a prompt resolution when he meets with President Putin at the G8 Summit next month.

The number of Ohio families affected by this ban is the highest of any state in the country. I met with these prospective parents this week when they traveled from Ohio to Washington to address this issue with their representatives. These parents are fully invested, they have made countless trips to Russia to spend time with the children and have even brought the children back to Ohio to bond with their families.

The parents in this process have done everything in their power to bring these children home and remain committed to finding a solution. The orphans affected by this ban are vulnerable and without families or homes in Russia. Many of these children have special needs or a disability that requires medical care that they are not receiving in Russia. These children are loved by and have come to know the American parents who want to welcome them into their homes and provide a life filled with promise.

In your bilateral discussions with Russia, I urge you to stress that these children, already so far along in the adoption process, deserve a humanitarian resolution to this difficult situation. American families involved in this process are willing to accommodate increased oversight of the adoptive children by the Russian government to ensure that they are safe, nurtured, and thrive with their adoptive families. I also encourage you to look at ways to negotiate changes to post adoption placement plans, which may also help motivate the Russian government to allow these adoptions to be completed.

Please find a solution for these children in your diplomatic work with the Russian government. Thank you for making these efforts on behalf of these children and families.

Sincerely,



Rob Portman
U.S. Senator