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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

May 13, 2021

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken  
Secretary of State  
United States Department of State  
2201 C Street N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I write to share our ongoing concern about the current suspension of adoptions from the People's Republic of China. As the United States enters a new chapter in our relationship with China, we will need to find areas of cooperation while also standing firm against Chinese government actions that run counter to our core values and interests. I believe a renewed partnership in adoption would provide an important area of cooperation between our two countries.

I request that you raise with the highest levels of the Chinese government the plight of the children waiting to be united with their adoptive American families, many of whom are from New Jersey. Today, several hundred American adoptive families—approved and matched with waiting children in China—have yet to be united with their children. Their adoptions were halted more than a year ago by Chinese government travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. It seems clear, however, that elevated diplomatic engagement is key to reestablishing the adoption partnership between our two nations.

I understand that over 400 American families are waiting to receive Travel Approval from the Chinese government in order to finalize their adoptions and bring their children home. Other families are in earlier stages of the process. In a significant number of cases, the children have chronic or deteriorating medical conditions, some of which are critical, yet adoption travel remains indefinitely halted even though better treatment options are available in the United States. Families in the United States are eager to work closely with authorities involved in order to bring their children home and provide the medical care they need. These families express appreciation for the updates they receive about their children from the Chinese adoption authorities and the dedicated work of the State Department's Office of Children's Issues.

Elevating this issue diplomatically now is essential and could help bring about a prompt resolution of the suspension. I would encourage, as part of such discussions, the designation of senior reciprocal points of contact between our governments, so that criteria for medical safety and travel can be efficiently established. China has recently re-opened certain types of travel, including family reunification. I am hopeful that, if viewed as a diplomatic priority, travel authorization could be considered for waiting adoptive families as well, on a compassionate, humanitarian basis.

I believe we all share the belief that uniting children with families is a worthy and achievable goal. I respectfully ask, therefore, that you raise the issue of resuming adoptions with China at the highest levels. An agreement would be a public demonstration that compassion for children and families transcends international borders.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Menendez." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a period at the end.

Robert Menendez  
Chairman