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Joint News Release from Hope Leads Home & the National Council for Adoption



Pictured: Children who have waited years to be united with their promised American families. Their stories deserve to be told!

A bipartisan coalition of governors from 33 states this week urged President Joe Biden to advocate for orphans in China who were matched with waiting families in the United States before the global pandemic but—inexplicably—are still languishing in institutions this Christmas.



Pictured: State seals of the governors who signed the bipartisan letter to President Biden

As the [letter](#) reads, “We are asking President Biden to take diplomatic action to impress upon the Chinese government the need to fulfill the humanitarian commitment already in place and honor pending adoptions.”

Ryan Hanlon, president and CEO of National Council For Adoption and an adoptive father, and **Aimee Welch**, mother of one of the waiting children in China and founder of [Hope Leads Home](#), parents for completing pending China adoptions, are **available for comment** and interviews.

Aimee writes and speaks on behalf of hundreds of American parents matched with children in China and she may be able to connect you with impacted families available to speak to local and regional press.



Pictured: A young girl who is matched with her adoptive family in the United States but still institutionalized in China.

Some background:

These adoptions were delayed years by the pandemic and then left in a state of uncertainty when China abruptly closed its intercountry-adoption program earlier this year, without providing a clear pathway for nearly 300 matched children to join their promised families.

The governors' letter follows up on years of advocacy, including a November [congressional letter](#) sent to President Biden by more than 100 members of the House and Senate.

More than 24,000 constituents have reached out to their governors and U.S. legislators on the issue via the National Council For Adoption [advocacy hub](#).

Ryan says...

Beijing's abrupt decision to end its intercountry-adoption program jeopardizes the long-term well-being of hundreds of orphaned children, many of whom have complex medical needs. As a result of China's decision, nearly 300 kids matched with U.S. families are languishing in Chinese orphanages.

These children are unlikely ever to be adopted with China due to their ages and needs. Without the opportunity for international adoption, these children face the prospect of growing up in institutions rather than with permanent, loving families.

The United States and China have long cooperated on intercountry adoption to prioritize the best interests of children. Between 1999 and 2023, Americans adopted over 80,000 children from China, offering many children the chance to thrive in a supportive family environment. This partnership now hangs in the balance, and the matched children deserve clarity about their future.

We're grateful to the 33 governors who agree with us on this issue and who, likewise, are encouraging President Joe Biden to advocate for these children on the international stage. China should honor its promise to these vulnerable children and their adoptive families in the United States.



Pictured: A young boy who awaits unification with his matched adoptive family in the United States.

Aimee says...

The holidays remind us that there is no place like home. For too long these 300 children, including my own precious daughter, have waited to be united with the loving families they were promised by the central international adoption authorities of China and the United States.

Waiting families like mine thank governors across the country who are joining us in asking for presidential engagement to help, at long last, bring a happy ending to the heartbreak of children who lost their families of origin and now have been told they may lose their hope of adoptive families, too.

What other current issue has united politicians and leaders like this, across the deep divides of party and varied state interests? The remarkably broad, bipartisan support demonstrated by these governors speaks to the universal, visceral understanding we all have that every child deserves a family. Their story deserves to be told. To learn more about the children who wait and the families who love them, please visit HopeLeadsHome.org.

Governors from the following states signed the letter in support of completing pending China adoptions: Alabama, American Samoa, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

Reply to this email or call Carolyn Bolton at [401-477-9849](tel:401-477-9849) and to reach Ryan and/or Aimee on this critical issue. You can also reach Aimee directly at Aimee@HopeLeadsHome.org