

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3218

October 30, 2013

The Honorable Michele Bachmann
Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, Co-Chair
2417 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Bachmann,

Thank you for your interest in issues related to foster care youth and adoption in the United States as Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth. As someone who is raising three beautiful adopted children and a member of the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, I appreciate your commitment to making sure that all of America's children have the gift of a strong, loving family that they deserve.

Twenty years ago, my partner Randy and I began caring for our first child, Jesus, whose biological parents were unable to care for him. Since then, we have adopted two wonderful daughters who also came from difficult family situations.

Having a family that looks a little different doesn't mean we lead unconventional lives. We struggle to ensure that left shoes end up on left feet; we fret over class trips; and we wipe runny noses. Our story is not unlike that of same-sex adoptive parents across the country. In fact, an estimated 16,000 same-sex couples are raising more than 22,000 adopted children, and approximately 2,600 same-sex couples are raising 3,400 foster children in the United States alone. Same-sex couples are six times more likely than their opposite-sex counterparts to be raising foster children.

Unfortunately, about two million lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are interested in adopting, but are prohibited from doing so due to discriminatory laws, policies and practices. In fact, the majority of states across the country do not permit LGBT people to jointly petition to adopt children

I write to you today to ask that you, in order to recognize the contributions of loving LGBT families with adoptive children and the importance of policies that include all families who want the joys of adoption, include the following clauses in the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth's National Adoption Month and Day resolution of 2013:

Whereas, two million lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are interested in adopting but for discriminatory law, policies and practices restricting their ability to do so;

Whereas, In order to open more homes to foster children, child welfare agencies should work to eliminate sexual orientation, gender identity, and marital status discrimination and bias in adoption and foster care recruitment, selection, and placement procedures.

Whereas, Professional organizations in the fields of medicine, psychology, law, and child welfare have taken official positions in support of the ability of qualified gay, lesbian, bisexual, and unmarried couples to foster and adopt a child, as supported by scientific research showing sexual orientation as a nondeterminative factor in parental success;

Whereas, Discrimination against potential foster or adoptive parents based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status is not in the best interests of children in the foster care system;

Thank you for your time and consideration. I have spoken with Representative Bass's office and they are receptive to this proposition. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

CC:

Representative Karen Bass, Co-Chair of the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth
Senator Mary Landrieu, Co-Chair of the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth
Senator James Inhoff, Co-Chair of the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth