

RESOLUTION NO. RS2019-____

A resolution urging the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and the Tennessee General Assembly to enact legislation securing the citizenship of internationally adopted adult individuals.

WHEREAS, since the close of World War II, over 500,000 children have been adopted from abroad by U.S. citizen parents; and

WHEREAS, The Child Citizenship Act of 2000 aimed to provide equal treatment under United States law for adopted and biological children by granting citizenship to internationally-born adoptees. However, when the act became law, it did not apply to internationally-born adoptees who were already over the age of 18; and

WHEREAS, as a result, an alarming number of adoptees who were born before February 27, 1982 and raised in the United States and/or did not enter the country on an "orphan visa," do not have U.S. citizenship and therefore potentially subject to deportation. These adoptees' parents did not complete necessary processes to provide their adopted children with citizenship, or in many cases, even a green card; and

WHEREAS, several deportations of individuals who were legally adopted from foreign countries have already taken place, breaking up families and returning the deported individuals to places where they do not know the language, culture or have any known family members; and

WHEREAS, adoptees who do not have citizenship have come from countries including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Germany, Guatemala, El Salvador, India, Ireland, Haiti, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Panama, Philippines, Russia, Ukraine, and Vietnam. There are an estimated 18,000 Korean American adoptees alone who do not have American citizenship despite having been legally adopted; and

WHEREAS, the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019 (S.1554 and H.R.2731), which will grant citizenship to all adult adoptees, was introduced with bipartisan support in the 116th Congress; and

WHEREAS, both bills seek to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to grant automatic citizenship to all qualifying children adopted by a U.S. citizen parent, regardless of the date on which the adoption was finalized or the entering visa. Citizenship would be granted to any individual who was adopted by a U.S. citizen before age 18, was physically present in the United States in the citizen parent's legal custody pursuant to a lawful admission before the individual reached age 18, never previously acquired U.S. citizenship, and was lawfully residing in the United States. The bills also would have given adult adoptees who had already been deported the opportunity to return to the United States; and

WHEREAS, resolutions in support of adoptee citizenship have already been passed in the states of California, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, and Nevada and in major cities such as Seattle, Los Angeles, Houston and Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Council supports as a civil right, automatic citizenship to all children adopted by a U.S. citizen parent. Children adopted by U.S. citizen parents should have the same rights as children of U.S. citizens. Legislation should be adopted that will provide citizenship for all adult adoptees whose adoptive parents did not complete the naturalization process while they were children.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY THAT:

Section 1. The Metropolitan Council hereby goes on record as urging the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and the Tennessee General Assembly to enact legislation securing the citizenship of internationally adopted adult individuals.

Section 2. The Metropolitan Clerk's Office is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the Tennessee delegation to the United States Congress, and the Davidson County Delegation to the Tennessee General Assembly.

Section 3. This resolution shall take effect from and after its passage, the welfare of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County requiring it.

INTRODUCED BY:

Jeff Syracuse
Member of Council