Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

December 21, 2012

His Excellency Vladimir Putin
President of the Russian Federation
The Kremlin
Moscow, Russia

Dear Mr. President:

We respectfully ask you to veto the law "On Measures of Coercion on Persons, Involved in the Violation of the Rights of Russian Citizens," which includes language that permanently bans adoptions of Russian children by American families. We are deeply saddened by the events in the Duma over the past few days which have led to the passage of this law, that would abrogate the bilateral agreement between our two countries that you signed earlier this year and which entered into force on November 1, 2012. We fear that this overly broad law would have dire consequences for Russian children.

If the law takes effect, thousands of Russian children living in institutions may lose an opportunity to become part of a family. As you know, our two countries have a long tradition of working together to find permanent homes for unparented children. At any given moment, based on the statistics of the past few years, there are at least 1,000 Russian children in the process of finding supportive and protective families in the United States. They and those who would follow them would become the real victims of a misplaced legislative effort. We share in your desire to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all adopted children and remain steadfast to the commitments we made in the bilateral agreement.

Nothing is more important to the future of our world than doing our best to give as many children the chance to grow up in a family as we possibly can.

We hope that your spirit of compassion for voiceless children will prevail so that this sad turn of events will not lead to harm to so many innocent children.

Mary L. Landrieu
Jon Tester
John Boozman
Frank R. Lautenberg
Maria Cantwell
Roy Blunt

Roger F. Wicker

Chuck Grassley

Jim Clyburn

Jane Camp

Karen Bass

David Lipinski

Jon Sundman

Amy Klobuchar

John Conyers

Jeanne Shaheen