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December 5, 2005

The Honorable Andrew Card
White House Chief of Staff
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20229

Dear Mr. Card:

The U.S. Department of State recently received from Romanian Secretary of State Theodora Bertzi a list of 101 adoption cases that were once open to American families and have now been closed. These orphans will not be transferred to their American families, as previously promised by President Basescu. The State Department was told that of the 101 cases, 94 of the orphans had been adopted domestically. The remaining 7 children were adopted either by a Romanian relative or by an American family who had established residency in Romania. The status of the approximately 100 remaining cases is unknown. It is my fear that they have been placed with biological parents who had previously abandoned them, distant relatives who do not want them, or in unsuitable homes.

It is my understanding that the State Department has requested that Secretary Bertzi disclose the methods and criteria used to determine which children are no longer available for international adoption. It is completely unacceptable that the Romanian government has not been entirely forthcoming in this process. Furthermore, it is disheartening that these children were previously promised to American families and have now been placed domestically. It is particularly disconcerting that the Romanians have chosen to go against their word and have disregarded the ongoing support the United States has shown to Romania, particularly in improving their child welfare programs and helping to properly place their orphans.

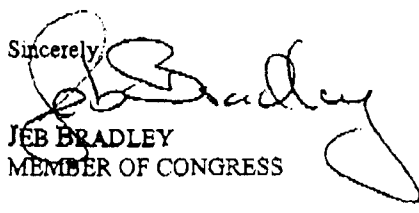
My constituent, Allyson Schaaf, received a letter from Secretary Bertzi that attempts to marginalize the pending adoption cases as mere administrative oversights. This is unacceptable. I acknowledge that the Romanians are under a great deal of pressure from the European Union and former Rapporteur, Baroness Emma Nicholson. However, that does not negate the promises of the Romanian government, in particular President Basescu, to transfer the approximately 200 orphans to their American families. Mrs. Schaaf and I, along with other adoptive parents, met with President Basescu at the Romanian Embassy in March of this year. During that meeting, President Basescu made a promise to my constituent, Allyson Schaaf, and the other adoptive parents. That promise was to bring their Romanian children home to their loving parents in the United States. When he made this promise, President Basescu verbally committed the Romanian government to transferring the orphans to their loving American parents.

President Basescu and the Romanian government have failed to follow through on this promise. I reiterate this because it is of great importance that Secretary Rice discusses this matter with President Basescu. The patience of the American families involved in this heart-wrenching dilemma has been nothing short of admirable. It is unfair to ask these families to wait any longer for their children. I trust that Ambassador Taubman, Secretary Rice, and the officials at our embassy in Bucharest will do everything in their power to hold the Romanians to this promise.

Due to the urgency of this matter, I would appreciate an immediate update of the status of Mrs. Schaaf's daughter, Valentina Bairam [case number 7795].

Thank you!

Sincerely,


JEB BRADLEY
MEMBER OF CONGRESS