



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN[™]

May 3, 2011

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) and our grassroots force of more than one million members and supporters nationwide, I ask you to support H.R. 1681, the Every Child Deserves a Family Act (ECDFA). With over 115,000 children and youth awaiting adoption across the U.S., it is simply unacceptable that qualified lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people can still be denied the opportunity to adopt simply because of who they are. It is equally troubling that many public child welfare agencies do not ensure that LGBT foster youth have access to safe, supportive homes. ECDFA would end this injustice against our community and these children. We hope you will support this legislation in the 112th Congress.

The American people believe that all children are entitled to a loving forever family. The LGBT community has largely been an untapped resource for children and youth. In fact, data from the National Family Growth Survey show that two million LGB adults are interested in adopting a child. Yet many child welfare agencies do not accept applications from openly LGB individuals or same-sex couples, do not recruit from the LGBT community, or remain reluctant to place children in LGBT families. Last year, 25,000 “aged out” of the system before they could experience the benefits of having a family of their own—a “home base” to count on. If all the children currently waiting to be adopted were placed in permanent homes, the annual cost savings nationwide are estimated to be between \$3.3 and \$6.3 billion.

Major organizations that work on behalf of protecting the interests of children, including the American Psychological Association, the American Medical Association, the North American Council on Adoptable Children, the Child Welfare League of America, and the American Bar Association all support adoption and foster parenting by qualified gay and lesbian parents.

We hope you will join us in supporting this historic piece of legislation. Please feel free to contact Allison Herwitt, Legislative Director, at (202) 216-1515 or Andrea Levario, Senior Public Policy Advocate at (202) 216-1520 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Joe Solmonese
HRC President