

November 4, 2011

The Honorable Fortney Stark
U.S. House of Representatives
239 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Stark:

On behalf of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), thank you for introducing H.R. 3333, the Foster Children Opportunity Act of 2011. LIRS is the national organization established by Lutheran churches in American to serve uprooted people, and is a recognized national leader in serving and protecting migrant children. We are also one of only two organizations that provide specialized foster care services for refugee and migrant children.

As you know, immigrant children who end up in the child welfare system are often eligible for immigration relief, including Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), a legal protection for abused, abandoned or neglected migrant children. Early identification is integral for ensuring that these vulnerable youth can continue to pursue their educational and work opportunities in the United States.

LIRS applauds your continued attention to the gaps in protection for children. We look forward to working with you to build support for this important bill. Please feel free to contact Eric B. Sigmon, LIRS Director for Advocacy, at (202) 626-7943 or via email at esigmon@lirs.org with any additional questions.

Yours in faith,



Linda Hartke
President and CEO
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service