

*#Adoption
file Hague
Convention*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 2909, the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000. This Act will implement the Hague Convention of 29 May 1993 on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption. The United States and sixty-five other countries came together to negotiate the Convention in response to abuses in the intercountry adoption process, including illegal child trafficking. By setting uniform standards, the Convention better protects the rights and interests of children, birth parents, and adoptive parents involved in intercountry adoption.

In its preamble, the Convention recognizes that children should grow up in a family environment and that properly safeguarded intercountry adoption offers the advantage of a permanent family to children who cannot readily be placed with a suitable family in their State of origin. The United States actively participated in the preparation and negotiation of this Convention, with the guidance and participation of representatives of U.S. adoption and family law interests. Since U.S. signature in 1994, several ratifying countries have increasingly expressed the view that they would prefer that their children emigrate only to countries that have agreed to comply with the Hague Convention's safeguards and procedures. As a result, the U.S. adoption community has become increasingly supportive of expeditious U.S. implementing legislation. This bill will ensure the full and uniform implementation of the Convention throughout the United States.

Adoption is an emotional event. With the complexities of international law and procedures, these cases are often overwhelming for the families involved. The Hague Convention and the implementing legislation will provide protections for children and parents engaged in intercountry adoption and will help ensure a standard of service that all families deserve.