

BY: Senator STAVISKY

URGING the New York State Congressional delegation to enact H.R.2731 securing the citizenship of internationally-adopted adult individuals

WHEREAS, Since the close of World War II, over 350,000 children have been adopted from abroad by United States citizen parents; and

WHEREAS, The Child Citizenship Act of 2000, passed by the 106th Congress, aimed to provide equal treatment under United States law for adopted and biological children by granting citizenship for internationally born adoptees; however, it did not apply to those who were over the age of 18 when the Act became law; and

WHEREAS, Tens of thousands of legally adopted individuals born before February 27, 1983, and raised in the United States or did not enter on an "orphan visa" do not have United States citizenship and therefore are potentially subject to deportation; these adoptees' parents did not complete the necessary processes to provide their adopted children with citizenship or, in many cases, even a green card; and

WHEREAS, The deportation of legally adopted individuals has occurred, breaking up families and returning these individuals to places where they were born but do not speak the language, understand the culture, or have any known family members; and

WHEREAS, The individuals who do not have citizenship were adopted from various countries including: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Germany, Guatemala, El Salvador, India, Ireland, Haiti, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Panama, Philippines, Russia, Ukraine, and Vietnam; there are an estimated 18,000 Korean American adoptees alone who do not have United States citizenship despite having been legally adopted; and

WHEREAS, Bills that would have granted citizenship to adult adoptees were introduced with bipartisan support in both the 114th and 115th Congresses; none of the bills were referred out of committee for a Congressional vote; and

WHEREAS, These bills sought to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to grant automatic citizenship to all qualifying children adopted by a U.S. citizen parent regardless of the date on which the adoption was finalized or the entrance visa; and

WHEREAS, Citizenship would be granted to any individual who was adopted by a U.S. citizen before age 18, was physically present in the United States in the citizen parent's legal custody pursuant to lawful admission before the individual reached age 18, never previously acquired U.S. citizenship, and was lawfully residing in the United States, while also giving adoptees who had already been deported the opportunity to return to the United States; and

WHEREAS, Biological children of U.S. citizen parents are not subject to deportation when they commit a crime, and children adopted by U.S. citizen parents should have the same rights as biological children of U.S. citizens; it is therefore unfair discrimination for the adopted child of U.S. citizen parents to be subject to deportation; and

WHEREAS, This Legislation is supported by several organizations such as: Korean American Immigration Heritage Foundation and Korean American Public Action Committee New York, Min Sun Kim, President; Also-Known-As, Michael Mullen, President; Adoptee Rights Campaign, Adoptee Rights Campaign, Joy Alessi, Director; and Adoptees for Justice, Kristopher Larsen, Director; and

WHEREAS, Naturalization of adult adoptees who immigrated to the United States under the promise of finding a permanent home is necessary to ensure they are not forcibly removed from what has become their home country; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the New York State Congressional delegation be and hereby is respectfully memorialized by this Legislative Body to enact H.R.2731 securing the citizenship of internationally-adopted adult individuals who are now adults and to pass the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2019; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the President of the Senate of the United States, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to each member of the Congress of the United States from the State of New York.