



July 19, 2007

The Honorable Norm Coleman
320 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
724 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the National Council For Adoption (NCFA) I am writing to express our support for your amendment to H.R. 2669, the College Cost Reduction Act of 2007, that would allow youth adopted from the foster care system at the age of 10 years or older to be considered as an "independent student" for higher education financial aid purposes.

Currently, there are 513,000 children in foster care, of which 114,000 are waiting to be adopted into a loving, permanent family. However, older children in foster care tend to have the hardest time being placed for adoption due to their age. In addition, many potential adoptive parents do not consider older children simply because they cannot afford the extra financial obligations of paying for college. This is a contributing factor to a startling 24,000 children who aged-out of the foster care system during the last year for which statistics are available without the permanency they deserve or the resources necessary to live productive lives. Your amendment would help ease this burden and help thousands of youth in foster care secure a better future.

NCFA strongly supports helping children in foster care find loving, permanent families and the support they need to become productive citizens. As such, NCFA is grateful for your work to bring this amendment forward and it is my hope that we can continue to work together on issues that concern our nation's children. Please let me know if there is anything NCFA can do to assist you in this important and worthwhile initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas C. Atwood". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Thomas C. Atwood
President and CEO