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## [S. 1300, Adoptive Family Relief Act](#)

### FLOOR SITUATION

On Tuesday, October 6, 2015, the House will consider [S. 1300](#), *the Adoptive Family Relief Act*, under suspension of the rules. S. 1300 was introduced on May 12, 2015 by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and passed the Senate by unanimous consent on July 14, 2015.

### SUMMARY

S. 1300 authorizes the Department of State to waive renewal fees for immigrant visas, or refund those already paid, for U.S. families adopting foreign children if the immigrant child was unable to use the original visa during its period of validity as a direct result of extraordinary circumstances (including the denial of an exit permit) and such inability was attributable to factors beyond the control of the adopting U.S. citizen parent or parents. The waiver authority applies to such visas issued on or after March 27, 2013.

### BACKGROUND

There are estimated to be more than 460 cases in which Congolese children either have been adopted, or are in the process of being adopted by American families, but who are unable to obtain necessary exit permits issued by the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to leave the country. The DRC has suspended the issuance of such documents because of unspecified concerns about the health and well-being of such children.<sup>1</sup>

Under current law, an immigrant visa for such adoptees expires if not used within six months of issuance, and costs \$325 to renew.<sup>2</sup> S. 1300 is designed to provide relief for families adopting children from abroad when those children are unable to immigrate to the United States in a timely manner. According to the bill sponsor, “the day you bring your child home is one of the happiest days of a parent’s life. It’s heartbreaking that hundreds of families do not know when that day will come.

<sup>1</sup> See Senate [letter](#) to DRC President Kabila and Prime Minister Matata Ponyo, April 17, 2014, at 1.

<sup>2</sup> <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/fees/fees-visa-services.html>

We need to support these families by reducing the financial burden they face while they wait for the situation in the Congo to be resolved.”<sup>3</sup>

### **COST**

A Congressional Budget Office (CBO) cost estimate is currently unavailable.

### **STAFF CONTACT**

For questions or further information please contact [Jerry White](#) with the House Republican Policy Committee by email or at 5-0190.

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<sup>3</sup> See Press Release—“[Senate Passes Feinstein, Johnson Bill to Waive Visa Renewal Fees for Adoptions from Democratic Republic of the Congo](#),” July 15, 2015.