

HOUSE WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MEMBER DAY
REP. NUNN TESTIMONY: HR 2510 FIGHT FOR FAMILIES ACT

- **Thank you, Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Neal, for providing a forum for non-Ways and Means Committee members, like myself, to articulate policy priorities within the Committee’s jurisdiction.**
- Mr. Chairman, I also want to commend you for your leadership on this important Committee and your efforts to put wasteful spending to a halt, ensuring our families, small businesses, and farmers have the tools they need to succeed.
- **As a dad of six, a foster and adoptive parent, and a co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth, I have firsthand experience in navigating the difficult and costly foster care and adoption systems.**
- On April 5, 2023, my wife, Kelly, and I adopted our two youngest daughters, Aliya and Jayna, after a lengthy process. Their adoption opened our eyes to the challenges and shortcomings each family encounters throughout the adoption process. While we were fortunate to bring our daughters to their ‘forever home’, many never get the opportunity.
- **Agency and attorney fees as well as additional expenses prevent many families from adopting a child. The average cost to adopt can reach anywhere from \$8,000 to \$40,000. Oftentimes, grandparents who wish to adopt their biological grandchildren find it nearly impossible to access the financial assistance necessary to bring their grandchildren home.**
- To help with high expenses, the Federal Adoption Tax Credit provides families with up to \$14,890 per child (in FY22). Qualified adoption expenses include adoption fees, court and attorney fees, traveling expenses, and more.

- **However, as currently written, this credit benefits only those who have a high federal income liability – making it difficult for retirees and low – to middle-income families to adopt.**
- According to the U.S. Administration for Children and Families, there are over 400,000 children in foster care, and over 100,000 waiting for adoption. 400,000 children do not have a home or family to call their own, causing instability, inconsistent care, and more. These numbers will continue to grow if families cannot afford to adopt due to financial circumstances.
- **That is why I introduced HR 2510, the *Fight for Families Act*. This bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to make the Federal Adoption Tax Credit permanent and fully refundable to families who adopt disadvantaged children. This includes children who cannot return to their parents' home as well as children in which a state has determined that certain factors such as ethnic background, age, and medical conditions prevent families from adopting without financial assistance.**
- Mr. Chairman, I'd like to submit to the Committee for the record, a graph from the Congressional Research Service's (CRS) 2020 report on Adoption Tax Benefits.
- **According to the CRS, families with an annual Adjusted Growth Income (AGI) of \$100,000 and above received roughly 66% of all Federal Adoption Tax Credit dollars. Yet families with an AGI of \$50k and under received just 2% of all credit dollars. The majority of those who received this credit, can already afford to adopt a child.**
- The *Fight for Families Act* incentivizes adoption for all families and ensures families of all backgrounds can adopt kids and have access to the Federal Adoption Tax Credit. This small change in our tax code will have a positive impact on children and families for many years to come.

- **Thank you, again, for the opportunity to appear before you today and I urge my colleagues on both sides to help more children find their forever home by supporting this bipartisan legislation.**
- I yield back the balance of my time.