

Attorney Jeffery Leving Urges Lawmakers: Fight for US Children Abducted Abroad

CHICAGO, Dec. 1 /PRNewswire/ -- On December 2, the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission in the House of Representatives will hear testimony from parents whose children were abducted internationally. The parents are testifying on behalf of two bills introduced by Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ) targeting international child abduction and giving these desperate parents hope for a swift reunion with their children.

Fathers' rights attorney Jeffery Leving (<http://dadsrights.com>), who was consulted by the US State Department as an expert on international abduction in October, is pushing lawmakers to attend the hearing and work unilaterally to protect families from being devastated by international abduction. The number of American children abducted abroad has increased 60% since 2005, an ominous trend illustrating the urgent need for legislative intervention.

The first bill, H.R. 3240 (International Child Abduction Act 2009), establishes protocols to prevent international abduction, advocate for US children abducted internationally, and assist the families left behind.

The second bill, H.R. 2702 (Suspend Brazil GSP Act), suspends trade preference with Brazil until Brazil complies with its obligations toward the US under the Hague Convention on International Child Abduction.

"Congressman Smith's proposed laws are a step in the right direction," says Leving. "Creating a standardized system to prevent international child abduction and streamlining the government's response when children are abducted will allow families affected by this tragedy to focus on being reunited rather than navigating a bureaucratic maze."

David Goldman, a left-behind-father who will be testifying at the hearing, inspired Congressman Smith's bills. Goldman's son Sean remains in Brazil five years after being abducted by his mother, who passed away last year. Sean is one of at least 64 American children abducted to Brazil who have not been returned to their custodial parents in the US.

Leving adds, "By imposing sanctions on countries like Brazil, whose judges have brazenly disregarded the Hague Convention, the US shows that we will not stand idle while American children remain separated from their parents in foreign lands."

Known for advocating strong family bonds, Chicago divorce attorney Jeffery Leving and his firm have reunited fathers and children since 1981. He helped reunite Elian Gonzalez with his father in Cuba, winning international support.

In August, Leving was selected as an expert resource for the first White House Roundtable & Town Hall Meeting on Responsible Fatherhood.