

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 3551

To modify the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 to provide a limited accreditation option for performing certain adoption services.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 14, 2023

Mr. WICKER (for himself and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To modify the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 to provide a limited accreditation option for performing certain adoption services.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Voluntary Limited Ac-
5 creditation for Adoption Services Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

7 It is the sense of Congress that—

8 (1) prospective adoptive parents should receive
9 high-quality services from experienced providers for

1 their child background studies, home studies, and
2 post-placement reports;

3 (2) the number of accredited adoption service
4 providers is declining in the United States, leading
5 to fewer options of accredited service providers;

6 (3) some foreign countries, primary providers
7 and many adoptive families have a preference that
8 only accredited adoption service providers conduct
9 intercountry home studies and post-placement/post-
10 adoption reporting, if required;

11 (4) accreditation and approval helps to ensure
12 compliance with standards and requires accrediting
13 entities to provide oversight, enforcement, and data
14 and report collection for accredited and approved
15 adoption service providers; and

16 (5) United States intercountry adoption prac-
17 tices can be enhanced by supporting an accreditation
18 system that includes a new, limited accreditation op-
19 tion for the provision of a background study on a
20 child, a home study on the prospective adoptive par-
21 ents, or a post-placement report, in addition to cur-
22 rent, comprehensive, mandatory accreditation for
23 primary providers.

1 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION**
2 **ACT OF 2000.**

3 (a) **DEFINITIONS.**—Section 3 of the Intercountry
4 Adoption Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14902) is amended—

5 (1) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or limited
6 accreditation” after “adoption services”;

7 (2) by redesignating paragraphs (13) through
8 (17) as paragraphs (14) through (18), respectively;
9 and

10 (3) by inserting after paragraph (12) the fol-
11 lowing:

12 “(13) **LIMITED ACCREDITATION.**—The term
13 ‘limited accreditation’ means voluntary accreditation
14 that is limited to the provision of 1 or more of the
15 following services:

16 “(A) Performing a background study on a
17 child in an outgoing case and reporting on such
18 a study.

19 “(B) Performing a home study on a pro-
20 spective adoptive parent in an incoming case
21 and reporting on such a study.

22 “(C) Monitoring a case after a child has
23 been placed with prospective adoptive parents
24 until final adoption, including preparing post-
25 placement reports.”.

26 (b) **ACCREDITATION AND APPROVAL.**—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 202(b)(1) of the
2 Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C.
3 14922(b)(1)) is amended to read as follows:

4 “(1) ACCREDITATION AND APPROVAL.—Accred-
5 itation or limited accreditation of agencies, and ap-
6 proval of persons, to provide adoption services in the
7 United States in cases subject to the Convention or
8 Intercountry Adoption Universal Accreditation Act
9 of 2012 (Public Law 112–276). At the time of ini-
10 tial or renewal of accreditation or limited accredita-
11 tion of agencies, and approval of persons, the apply-
12 ing entity shall indicate whether the entity seeks ac-
13 creditation as—

14 “(A) an accredited agency or approved per-
15 son; or

16 “(B) an agency with a limited accredita-
17 tion.”.

18 (2) EXEMPTION FROM PAPERWORK REDUCTION
19 ACT.—Section 503(c) of the Intercountry Adoption
20 Act of 2000 (42 U.S.C. 14953(c)) is amended by in-
21 sserting “202(b)(1),” after “104,”.

22 **SEC. 4. RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this Act or the amend-
24 ments made by this Act may be construed to require that
25 intercountry adoption service providers have a limited ac-

1 creditation (as defined in section 3(13) of the Intercountry
2 Adoption Act of 2000, as amended by section 3(a)(3)),
3 to provide a home study on prospective adoptive parents
4 pursuing an intercountry adoption.

5 (b) DEFINITION OF ADOPTION SERVICE.—Nothing
6 in this Act or in the amendments made by this Act may
7 be construed to modify the definition of “adoption service”
8 under section 3 of the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000
9 (42 U.S.C. 14902).

10 **SEC. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

11 This Act shall take effect on the date that is 90 days
12 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

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