



Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Hearing
Witness Biographies
The Rights of Parents and Children: How to Better Implement the Goldman Act on Child Abduction

Panel I



Patricia E. Apy is an international and interstate family law partner with Paras, Apy and Reiss, a New Jersey-based law firm that specializes in family law. She has directed the international litigation of child custody disputes throughout the world, serving clients in a wide range of cases in signatory countries and non-signatories to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. Her expertise ranges from crafting enforceable, multi-jurisdictional agreements to managing complex international parental abduction matters, implicating international treaty law and global law enforcement. Among the many countries in which she has litigated, been qualified as an expert witness or served as a consultant on international family disputes, are locations as diverse as the United Kingdom, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, Italy, Pakistan, Australia, India, Japan, South Africa, Israel, Lebanon and Canada. Of note, she successfully represented the left-behind father, David Goldman in the repatriation of his minor son from Brazil, a case garnering worldwide attention to the application of the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. As a result of this work, and her consultation to both the United States Department of State, Department of Defense and Members of Congress, she enjoys strong relationships with diplomats and colleagues worldwide who provide additional resource in serving her private clients. She has testified six times before the Congress of the United States, specifically, before subcommittees of the House Foreign Affairs Committee on proposed legislation regarding international parental abduction; and before subcommittees of the House Veteran's affairs committee on proposed legislation regarding child custody and military members.



In addition to being an award-winning filmmaker, **Jeffery Morehouse**, volunteers much of his time as Executive Director of Bring Abducted Children Home (www.bachome.org). Bring Abducted Children Home is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the immediate return of internationally abducted children being wrongfully detained in Japan. It also strives to end Japan's human rights violation of denying children unfettered access to both parents. BAC Home works to increase public awareness through outreach on the crisis of international parental child abduction. He collaborates with an alliance of international partners working to end child abduction to and within in Japan. He is also a founding partner in The Coalition to End International Parental Child Abduction (www.endchildabduction.org) uniting organizations to work passionately to end international parental kidnapping of children through advocacy and public policy reform. Between 2015-2019 he testified and briefed the U.S. Congress six times. Though his U.S. sole custody order was recognized as legal by courts in Japan in 2014 and 2017, his son “Mochi” Atomu Imoto Morehouse remains kidnapped and cut off from him.



Dr. Noelle Hunter is the president and co-founder of iStand Parent Network Inc., a nongovernmental organization that empowers parents to recover their children from International Parental Child Abduction (IPCA) and advocates for public policy reform to prevent and end this crime against children and families. Dr. Hunter cofounded iStand Parent Network after successfully recovering her daughter from an abduction to Mali in 2014. Since 2014, iStand has assisted parents with reunifications of 54 children who were parentally abducted or wrongfully retained. iStand also works cooperatively with local, state and federal agencies, members of Congress, NGOs and international advocates to advance policy reform to strengthen domestic and global IPCA prevention and response. Dr. Hunter has served as an invited witness on IPCA before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs and Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health and Global Human Rights. She has also offered expert testimony on IPCA before the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission) and served as a consultant to the U.S.-based National Criminal Justice Training Center. Dr. Hunter received the Humanitarian Award from the Alabama chapter of the NAACP. She is the former dean of students at Ohio Valley University and taught government and international relations at West Virginia University and Morehead State University. She is the former Walter Rollins Scholar for the West Legislature and the James E. Webb Fellow at the Smithsonian Institution Office of Policy and Analysis. She is currently a lecturer of political science at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, Ala and is working to establish a Center for IPCA Prevention and Research. Dr. Hunter has three daughters, Maayimuna, Rysa and Rachel.