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## **2014 Report Outlines Humanitarian and Financial Impact of Nepal Adoption Closure**

### *Department of State Urged to Reopen Nepal Adoptions*

Both Ends Burning (BEB), a nonprofit organization dedicated to defending every child's human right to a permanent loving family, today released an investigative report, titled *Paper Chains*, documenting what it refers to as the US Department of State's "misconduct and bias against adoptions" in suspending international adoptions from Nepal.

In August 2010, the US Government suspended adoptions for abandoned children from Nepal while accusing 56 American families in the adoption process of having cases containing "serious irregularities" and "indicators of fraud." These adoptive families overcame the allegations, at great financial and emotional expense. The US Government ultimately relented and approved their adoptions.

BEB examined these cases over the last six months and found that in every single case that the allegations proved to be untrue, as revealed in its new 53-page report drawn from thousands of pages of supporting documentation. BEB discovered that the State Department's actions resulted in children spending an average of more than 200 additional days in orphanage care, further impairing each child's health and mental development. BEB also found that the adoptive families were forced to spend, on average, an additional \$25,000 to conduct investigations confirming the status of their adopted children.

BEB's report documents deliberate deceptive actions taken by the Department of State with the objective of ending adoptions from Nepal, with no apparent regard for the Nepali children or American families affected. Aaron Skalka, an adoptive parent from Maryland, stated that the State Department "overstepped its authority" and blamed it "for the trauma and economic devastation they caused my family. They put us all in harm's way for the sake of advancing an agenda that had nothing to do with our adoption."

Despite the allegations of irregularities and fraud having been disproved, the U.S. suspension remains in effect without explanation, eliminating any chance for abandoned Nepali orphans to come into American families through adoption.

"Nepal is one of the clearest examples of the absurdity of the U.S. Government's approach to orphans and inter-country adoption," said Chuck Johnson, President and CEO at National Council For Adoption. "They banned inter-country adoption for undefined fears of child trafficking, and refused to help engaged and well-intentioned Nepalese adoption officials address their alleged concerns. As a result the U.S. government doomed orphans that could have been adopted into loving families."

BEB believes that hundreds, if not thousands, of children have been wrongfully denied the opportunity to become part of a permanent loving family, and that they remain stuck in orphanages because of the Department's refusal to even discuss future adoptions from Nepal.

"We've released this report to seek justice for the families and children harmed by the conduct of our Department of State" said Kelly Dempsey, Counsel and Director of Outreach and Advocacy at BEB. "The fact that no fraud was found in any of the adoption cases and yet Nepal remains closed today is simply wrong. The suspension should be lifted, the Department of State should be held to account for their actions, and reforms need to be pursued by Congress to make sure this does not happen again."

The full Nepal report, entitled "Paper Chains", is available at: <https://bothendsburning.org/paper-chains>. Find more information at: <http://www.bothendsburning.org>

About Both Ends Burning: Both Ends Burning is a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to defending every child's human right to a permanent loving family. Learn more at [bothendsburning.org](http://bothendsburning.org).

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