

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

October 1, 2021

His Excellency Koji Tomita
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Embassy of Japan in the United States
2520 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ambassador Tomita:

Last year, we wrote to then-Ambassador Shinsuke Sugiyama regarding the important issue of international parental child abduction (IPCA). In that letter, we raised the challenges faced by the American parents of abducted children, particularly for American parents whose children are abducted to Japan. We also acknowledged efforts made by the Japanese government to improve its compliance with the Hague Abduction Convention.

Ambassador Sugiyama responded with a letter acknowledging that IPCA is an “extremely important issue for the Japanese Government,” and that the Japanese Government “will continue working to address this issue until all outstanding cases are resolved.” This letter was also followed by conversations between members of our staff and Embassy staff. We appreciated the engagement at that time, and welcome further engagement on this “extremely important issue.”

The 2021 U.S. State Department Annual Report found there were 12 open and active abduction cases in Japan throughout 2020, involving a total of 18 children. This includes 9 children abducted from the United States to Japan in 2020. At the end of 2020, 6 cases remained open involving 10 children. In addition to these open and active cases, there are still 9 pre-Convention abduction cases which remain unresolved. Unfortunately, a closed case does not always mean a returned child or a positive resolution. It can simply be the case that a child reached the age of 16, and is no longer covered by the Hague Abduction Convention.

With new leadership in Japan, we are hopeful that further progress can be made to reunite left-behind parents and their abducted children. We humbly ask that you will continue to encourage the Japanese Government to do everything possible to resolve *all* remaining international parental abduction cases, both pre- and post-Convention.

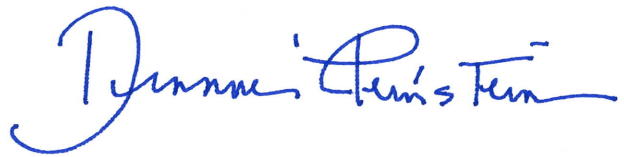
Our countries maintain strong diplomatic bonds, and we share many values and interests. We hope that our nations will partner together and share in the success of ending the practice of international parental child abduction. We recognize that Japan has made progress on this “extremely important issue” since joining the Hague Abduction Convention, and welcome continued dialogue to end the practice

We thank you for your attention to this matter, and for recognizing our joint commitment to securing the return of every single American child abducted abroad. We look forward to working with you to ensure the return of American citizen children both now and in the future.

Sincerely,



Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator