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Senator Clinton Honors Garden City Angel in Adoption

Addresses Angels in Adoption Gala



WASHINGTON, DC—Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton met with Garden City resident Jeanine Castagna, whom Senator Clinton nominated as New York’s Angel in Adoption this year. The Angels in Adoption Program is the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute’s (CCAI) signature public awareness program and provides an opportunity for members of Congress to honor constituents who have enriched the lives of foster children and orphans.

Senator Clinton also addressed the Angels in Adoption Gala in Washington, praising Jeanine, CCAI and all of this year’s “National Angels” for their work. “Jeanine and this year’s other nominees truly are angels for so many children in need,” said Senator Clinton.

This year, Senator Clinton nominated Jeanine Castagna from Garden City, New York as an Angel in Adoption. Ms. Castagna has been involved with adoption for a decade. She received her law degree from Hofstra University in 1996 and has been practicing adoption law ever since. While still in law school she handled a pro bono case involving adoption. Six years ago Jeanine started her own practice that focuses specifically on adoption law. Throughout her career, Jeanine has been involved in over three hundred private placement domestic newborn adoptions, step-parent adoptions and international re-adoptions. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, a member of the Adoption Committee of the New York State Bar Association, the

American fertility Association, RESOLVE, the National Infertility Network Exchange, and of DES Action. She and her husband are founding members of the Tender Loving Care Foundation, a non-profit organization supporting the parents of babies in the neonatal intensive care unit of the North Shore Long Island Jewish Health System in New York, as well as serving on the Board of Directors for that organization.

Senator Clinton has long been an advocate for increasing and improving the adoption of children from foster care. The Senate Finance Committee recently passed child welfare legislation that includes key provisions from S.661, Senator Clinton's Kinship Caregiver Support Act. The provisions included from the bill, which Senator Clinton has championed with Senator Snowe, will provide federal assistance to states for subsidized guardianship, establish a Kinship Navigator Program, increase opportunities for relatives to step in when children are removed from their parents and placed in foster care, and clarify that states may waive standards for relative and non-relative foster homes on a case-by-case basis so families face fewer barriers in attempting to care for their loved ones' children.

Senator Clinton also introduced the Adoption Improvement Act of 2007 - a bill that establishes a demonstration project aimed at improving the retention of adults who inquire with child welfare agencies about adopting children from foster care. She also introduced the Focusing Investments and Resources for a Safe Transition (FIRST) Act to provide individual development accounts to youth 'aging out' of foster care.

In the 110th Congress, Senator Clinton has introduced several pieces of legislation to support children in the child welfare system, including a resolution in the United States Senate recognizing the importance of connecting foster youth to the workforce through internship programs and other employment opportunities.

As First Lady, Senator Clinton worked with Congress to establish the Adoption Incentives program, and in the Senate she has fought to increase the adoption tax credit, and has co-sponsored legislation aimed at increasing adoptions of foster children with special needs.

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