Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to use my time to discuss another important matter.

I want to thank you, Madam Secretary, for taking the time last

week to meet with me and with the gentleman from Cincinnati,

Tom Sylvester. Many Members on the Committee will remember

that Tom is one of those unfortunate left-behind parents whose

daughter, Carina, is the victim of international parental child abduction.

His daughter was stolen from him when she was 13

months old. She just turned 6 last week, and for 5 years Tom has

been trying to play a part in his daughter’s life.

He played by the rules. He won all of the way up the ladder, all

of the way up to the Austrian Supreme Court, yet he still does not

have his daughter.

I can assure the Secretary that her personal interest in this case

is appreciated not only by Tom Sylvester but by many other leftbehind

parents in this country. Madam Secretary, you have sent a

message to those thousands of parents that they are not fighting

this battle alone, and you are to be highly commended for your actions.

We very much appreciate your effort to contact the Austrian

chancellor on Tom and Carina’s behalf, and we hope that you will

be able to share some positive news with us either today or sometime

in the very near future.

Madam Secretary, I want to thank you for your courtesy and

intervention. Your work on behalf of the stolen children and their

parents is very much appreciated, and I want to thank you personally.

Thank you for your action. This Committee passed

bipartisan legislation; Nick Lampson, a Democrat from Texas, has

given speech after speech on the floor of the House trying to highlight

this issue; and I would just encourage you and all other

American officials when we are dealing with other governments to

bring this issue up and let them know that good relations with the

United States are dependent on their following The Hague convention,

an agreement which they signed. Unfortunately, many, including

Austria and Germany and Sweden and others, are not complying.

Thank you for your time and attention, and we hope that you

will continue to work on this in the future.