



FORBES | TATE
PARTNERS

MEDIA – Engaging Local Press

Storytelling

The media, particularly local media, is always on the lookout for good stories. These stories are at the crux of their business, and it is in their best interest as journalists to tell the most powerful stories that they can. Just as unique stories resonate with Members of Congress, so too do they capture the attention of the media. Focusing on the power of the ATC, and the dramatic impact it has on the lives of adopted children and adopted parents alike, will make each story the most resonant with members of the media.

In the era of the 24-hour news cycle, the media is feeling increasing pressure to tell captivating stories. Coalition members have those exact stories – communicate them effectively and you will earn media. The following language will help coalition members tell their stories to local media:

Connecting to Local Press

When connecting with local press, your story should be front and center. Local press, given the size of their audience, is always hard-pressed to find and report on captivating stories. Additionally, local press is always seeking to localize national issues. When working with press, lead with the local value of the story you are pitching – explain how the subject of the story is in their area and the impact their story has on others in the area.

Dos and Don'ts

DOS

- Offer your story as something that might interest them
- Stress the localized nature of your story
- Highlight how your story is applicable to others in the area
- Talk about the real-life implications of policymaking – explain how Members of Congress aren't thinking about the real effect of getting rid of this credit – and how it helped your family

DON'TS

- Harass members of the media if they are unresponsive or slow to respond; newsrooms are increasingly understaffed
- Discuss topics unrelated to the issue, include chances of re-election for your Member of Congress
- Discuss topics related to the President or politics generally
- Discuss tax reform broadly – focus on your story and how the tax credit helped you

Templates

- 1 – Letter To The Editor (To Send To Your Local Paper)
- 2 – Op-Ed (To Send To Your Local Paper)

Sample Letter To The Editor

(Typically, the desired word count is under 300 words)

There are many businesses and families that will benefit from comprehensive tax reform. We could use lower rates and less paperwork when filing our taxes every year. But that shouldn't come at the cost of making adoption harder and more expensive for American families.

The decision to adopt a child is one of the most joyful and rewarding a family can make, but it may also be one of the most expensive. While there is no average cost of adoption, most domestic infant or intercountry adoption costs typically range between \$10,000 and \$40,000. Adoption from foster care is more affordable upfront, but children adopted from foster care often have significant special needs that may require added expenses for years to come. I know that my family might not have been able to adopt our child[ren], INSERT NAMES, without it.

On behalf of the countless children waiting to find a forever family, and the many thousands of families who stand to benefit from the adoption tax credit, I'm asking Congress to do the right thing and save the Adoption Tax Credit.

[Signatory Fname Lname, and brief bio/blurb about them]

Sample Op-Ed

Save the Adoption Tax Credit – Children Need Families
(Typically, the desired word count is roughly 800 words)

There are many businesses and families that will benefit from comprehensive tax reform. We could use lower rates and less paperwork when filing our taxes every year. But that shouldn't come at the cost of making adoption harder and more expensive for American families.

The decision to adopt a child is one of the most joyful and rewarding a family can make, but it may also be one of the most expensive. While there is no average cost of adoption, most domestic infant or intercountry adoption costs typically range between \$10,000 and \$40,000. Adoption from foster care is more affordable upfront, but children adopted from foster care often have significant special needs that may require added expenses for years to come. Many children in need of families have faced challenges and may need additional care to reach their full potential. The adoption tax credit, currently about \$13,000, goes a long way to support parents willing to give families to children who need and deserve them. That's why it's so concerning that this credit on the chopping block in the tax reform debate.

In our family, the adoption tax credit was life-changing for our children because... We could not have adopted without the credit because... (Include your own story or personal details on why this credit matters to you!)

Since 1997, the adoption tax credit has helped thousands of American families defray a portion of the high cost of adoption, allowing them to provide children with loving,

permanent families through adoption while experiencing reduced financial hardship. Although the adoption tax credit was made a permanent part of the tax code at the end of 2012, it was not made refundable. As a result, it will benefit fewer low- and middle-income families, and in many cases will prevent these families from adopting. Even more troubling, recent proposals about comprehensive tax reform suggest eliminating the adoption tax credit altogether.

If many American families can't afford the high costs related to adoption, it is the waiting children who will suffer – the more than 100,000 children currently available for adoption from foster care, and the countless millions of orphaned and abandoned children worldwide. Our legislators have the opportunity to continue the life-changing support that the adoption tax credit provides. Please join me and other adoption advocates. Use your voice to bring change for children. Contact your Senators and Representatives in Congress and ask them to act on behalf of children and families and make sure the adoption tax credit stays in the tax code and is made refundable.

There is just too much to lose.

[Signatory Fname Lname, and brief bio/blurb about them]

AMPLIFY– Sharing Your Story

Now that you've shared your story, it's time to amplify it! This includes tweeting your story, op-ed, or letter to the editor and sharing on Facebook. Below are some helpful tips for using social media:

Tips:

- Keep things short and simple
- Make sure to tag people – including your Member of Congress
- Make sure to link back to your story
- Make it personal! People want to hear your story