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Representative Van Hollen Celebrates the Attachment & Trauma Network as an *Angels in Adoption*® To Be Recognized at National Event in Washington, DC

Frederick, MD – August, 22, 2016. Representative Christopher Van Hollen will celebrate the Attachment & Trauma Network, Inc. (ATN) as a 2016 *Angels in Adoption*® awardee for their outstanding advocacy for trauma-informed, attachment-focused resources and supportive care for adoptees. The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI), which orchestrates the *Angels in Adoption*® Program will honor the Attachment & Trauma Network at an awards ceremony on September 20 and gala on September 21 in Washington, DC.

ATN is being honored for 21 years of supporting and educating adoptive parents about trauma and attachment disorders through online support groups, a crisis line, educational programs and advocacy. Since 1995, ATN's all-volunteer organization of therapeutic parents and professionals has supported thousands of adoptive families with the overall goal of a permanent, successful family for every child. ATN's Childhood Trauma Awareness campaign reached over 50,000 people in 2015, and their latest initiative, started in June – Trauma-Sensitive Schools – has already trained teachers in 5 states.

The *Angel in Adoption*® Program is CCAI's signature public awareness event and provides an opportunity for all members of the U.S. Congress to honor the good work of their constituents who have enriched the lives of foster children and orphans in the United States and abroad. This year, more than 140 "Angels" are being honored through the *Angels in Adoption*® Program.

"The *Angels in Adoption*® Program is a unique annual opportunity in the nation's Capital to shine a well-deserved spotlight on the power of adoption and the unspoken heroes who have made the dream of a family a reality for children. Since the program's inception, over 2,500 Angels have come to Washington to share their firsthand adoption experiences with Members of Congress, highlighting its joys, as well as the barriers encountered in the process," said Becky Weichhand, Executive Director at CCAI. "Members of Congress are then able to use their new experiential understanding of these issues to create policy improvements that better support these children and the families that open their hearts and homes to them."

In addition to the more than 140 Angels from around the country, National *Angels in Adoption*® honorees will be recognized at the gala for their dedication and commitment nationally and internationally to child welfare on a grand scale. This year's National Angels in Adoption® honoree is the Minnesota Vikings. Former National Angels include Korie and Willie Robertson, Shonda Rhimes,

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Deborra-Lee Furness Jackson, First Lady Laura Bush, Patti LaBelle, Jane Seymour, the late Muhammad Ali, the late Dave Thomas, Steven Curtis Chapman, Bruce Willis, Alonzo Mourning, Rhea Perlman and Kristin Chenoweth.

“We’re honored that ATN is being recognized by the Congressional coalition and by the adoption community for the important work of supporting families in their quest for trauma-informed, attachment-focused resources and care,” said Julie Beem, ATN’s Executive Director. “This award really belongs to the countless volunteers – parents and professionals – who, over the last two decades, have passionately and compassionately given of their time and experience to bring awareness to the blight of children impacted by early trauma and to support the families helping the children to heal.”

CCAI is a 501(c)3 nonpartisan organization dedicated to raising awareness about the tens of thousands of orphans and foster children in the United States and the millions of orphans around the world in need of permanent, safe and loving homes through adoption.

CCAI was created in 2001 by the active co-chairs of the bicameral, bipartisan Congressional Coalition on Adoption, one of Congress’ premier caucuses. The goal of the caucus is to eliminate policy barriers that hinder children from realizing their basic right of a family and more effectively raise Congressional and public awareness about adoption. The *Angels in Adoption*® Program was established in 1999 as a Congressional press conference to honor outstanding individuals. Since then, the program has developed into a yearlong public awareness campaign, culminating in an extraordinary awards gala and celebration in Washington, DC.

CCAI does not receive any government funding and relies on the generous support of foundations, corporations, and individuals to accomplish this mission. For more information, visit www.ccaainstitute.org or www.angelsinadoption.org.

Likewise, ATN is a 501(c)3 non-profit that relies on individual donors, foundations, and memberships to serve children and families across the nation. For more information on ATN’s programs visit www.attachmenttraumanetwork.org

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