



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on May 31, 2013

## **GOP Congressmen Urge DOJ to Grant Asylum to German Homeschool Family**

Following a federal appeals court decision denying asylum to a German homeschool family, a group of U.S. congressmen have sent a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder asking the Department of Justice (DOJ) to intervene. [On May 14](#), the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a 2012 decision by the Board of Immigration Appeals denying a request by Uwe and Hannalore Romeike to remain in the United States with their six children. The Romeikes fled to America in 2008 after suffering years of persecution from the German government over their decision to educate their children at home. Since then the family has been involved in a non-stop battle to remain in the country, with the Obama administration's DOJ taking a lead role in trying to force the family's deportation back to their native land.



Led by Indiana Representative Marlin Stutzman (shown), the 27 congressman [penned a letter](#) to Holder, asking him to intervene and grant the family asylum in the United States. "A decision to deny the Romeikes the opportunity to educate their children freely is a decision to abandon our commitment to freedom," the letter reads. "Doing so would put America alongside those countries that believe children belong to the community or state."

The congressmen advised Holder that under U.S. law, "asylum should be granted to those experiencing persecution aimed at members of a 'particular social group,' which possesses an 'immutable' characteristic that either cannot or should not be required to be changed." The lawmakers expressed their agreement with the 2010 ruling of Immigration Judge Lawrence O. Burman that German homeschoolers represent a unique social group that is being persecuted by the German government. "Although parents can change their minds about homeschooling, no parent in a free nation should be forced by the state to make that decision," the congressmen said.

Urging Holder to intervene, the lawmakers emphasized that the Romeike family "fled to our country, seeking relief from high fines, removal of their children by armed police officers, and threats of prison and termination of their parental rights. If forced to return to Germany, they will certainly face renewed persecution. As Americans, we have an obligation to stand with those who seek freedom. The Romeike family should find a welcoming home in the United States."

In addition to Stutzman, the congressmen — all Republicans — signing the letter included Joe Pitts of Pennsylvania, Jeff Duncan of South Carolina, Bill Huizenga of Michigan, Lee Terry of Nebraska, Steve Stockman of Texas, Daniel Webster of Florida, and Tim Huelskamp of Kansas.



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Michael Farris of the [Home School Legal Defense Association](#) (HSLDA), which is representing the Romeike family in its battle to stay in the United States, said May 28 that his group would appeal the Sixth Circuit's decision and appreciated the congressional letter. "The Romeikes are doing the exact same thing the Pilgrims did hundreds of years ago," said Farris in a statement, "and they need to see there are still people in our government who care for this essential American ideal."

Included in the HSLDA efforts on behalf of the Romeikes is a [petition drive](#) that has already surpassed the 100,000 signatures needed for an official response from the Obama administration on the issue — a response that the White House has thus far refused to offer.

Farris said that "there is no doubt of the ability of the Obama administration to use its discretion to immediately grant this family permanent asylum. We urge the administration to do so at once. If our administration is willing to explore a policy of leniency for millions of immigrants, it is simply inexplicable why they cannot find room for one homeschooling family from Germany."

Photo of Marlin Stutzman



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