

Rothman Gets Feds To Postpone Deportation Of Irish Asylum Seeker's Wife & Children

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Moves Allows McAllister Family To Spend Christmas Together In New Jersey

Hackensack, NJ - Continuing his efforts to help gain political asylum for an Irish Catholic family now living in Wallington, New Jersey, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) today announced that he has gotten the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE) to postpone the deportation of Malachy McAllister's wife and children to Northern Ireland. Rothman reached out to John Carbone, Interim Field Office Director for Detention and Removal with BICE yesterday to get him to grant a 30 day extension for Bernadette McAllister and her children Paul Gary, Nicola, and Sean to allow them to stay in the United States through Christmas and New Year's. During this time, their lawyers will work to have the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals consider their political asylum case.

"I am so pleased that the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement honored my request to allow Bernadette McAllister and her children to be together in the United States with their husband and father during this Christmas season," Rothman said. "Securing this delay of deportation is an important step forward in our efforts to secure political asylum for all the members of the McAllister family. They need to stay in the United States and not be forced back to Northern Ireland where they would almost certainly be subject to attack."

Bernadette McAllister added, "I am very grateful for all of Congressman Rothman's work to help my entire family stay together during the Christmas season and for his work to help secure us political asylum in the United States. He has been so incredibly helpful through this whole ordeal and is committed to keeping us from being forced to return back to Northern Ireland."

Due to Rothman's direct intervention with immigration officials several weeks ago, Malachy McAllister and one of his sons, Mark, were given permission to remain free in the United States until the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals takes further action. However, Mrs. McAllister and her other children had been granted asylum on October 11, 2000 following a hearing before an immigration judge in Newark, New Jersey. On November 17, 2003, the Board of Immigration Appeals reversed that ruling and gave them until December 17, 2003 to voluntarily leave the United States. Mrs. McAllister and her children then filed a Petition for Review with the U.S. Third Circuit Court of Appeals on November 21, 2003.

Malachy McAllister and his family fled Northern Ireland following an armed loyalist attack on their home in October 1988, in which 26 shots were fired into their living room. These shots barely missed McAllister's children and mother-in-law. Fearing for their lives, McAllister and his family fled Northern Ireland and have been seeking asylum in the United States. Many believe that if forced to return to Northern Ireland they will once again be the targets of violence.

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