

March 6, 2012

Co-Chair Terry B. Gerratana
Select Committee on Children
Room 011, Capitol Building
Hartford, CT 06106

Subject: Support for Raised Senate Bill 296

Dear Co-Chair Gerrantana,

I am the first mother of a daughter born in 1972 and surrendered for adoption. As the State Representative of the 30-year-old American Adoption Congress (AAC), a national organization that represents adopted persons, birth parents and adoptive parents, I'd like to ask you and the members of the Select Committee on Children to pass SB 296. SB 296 will allow Connecticut-born adult adoptees to receive a copy of their original birth certificates (OBC), upon request, removing the current requirement that they first obtain an order from a court allowing them to do so.

Since new laws have been passed in Alabama, Delaware, Illinois, Oregon, New Hampshire, Maine, Rhode Island and Tennessee allowing adult adoptees access to their original birth certificates, over 20,000 adoptees have received their original birth certificates with no harm shown to anyone, including birthparents. These states join Kansas and Alaska where original birth certificates were always available.

The data reveals that if access has had any effect on adoptions and abortions, it has been to increase adoptions and decrease abortions. Please take the time to look at this data that is collected from the Health Departments of those states. Data on Rhode Island is not available at this time because they are scheduled to release original birth certificates starting on July 1st, 2012

http://www.americanadoptioncongress.org/reform_adoption_data.php

When New Hampshire (2005), Maine (2007) and Rhode Island (2011) passed legislation allowing all its adult adoptees to obtain an uncertified copy of their original birth certificates, nearly 70% of each states' legislators voted in favor of restoring the "human right" to its native born adult adoptees to obtain their OBC.

In New Hampshire, or Maine there have been no reports of any lawsuits, negative consequences or problematic behavior by adopted persons or damage to birthmother's lives as a result of the legislation that passed in these states. As a mother who lost my daughter to adoption in 1972, I was never promised confidentiality nor did I ever expect confidentiality. I especially never wanted to be a secret from my own daughter.

Since the new law took effect in New Hampshire in 2005, almost 1500 birth certificates have been requested with no harm reported. In Oregon since 2000, over 10,000 adult adoptees have received their birth certificates, again with no ill effects.

SB 296 will restore the privilege of Connecticut-born adult adoptees to access their identifying information without restriction, thus granting them rights equal to those enjoyed by all other citizens of Connecticut.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Aderhold
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cc: Members of the Select Committee on Children