

Beth Finchler HB 5144
Stamford, CT

To Public Health Committee Co-Chairs Representative Terri Gerratana and Representative Susan Johnson, and Members of the Public Health Committee:

I support the rights of adopted persons to have access to their original birth certificates. If I need a copy of my birth certificate, I can just run over to city hall, pay the fee, and there it is (I'm not adopted). But, if I was adopted, I would not be able to do the same thing. This is fundamentally unfair. All citizens of our state should be treated alike. A person's birth certificate is personal information they are entitled to. What could be more personal than having confirmation of the exact time, date and place of your birth? What could be more personal than knowing exactly who your parents are? And, in this day and age, original birth certificates are being used more and more for security reasons. Plus the fact that medical advances depend more and more on genetic history. I can't think of a single reason not to support this bill. I know there are people who claim parents (birth or adopted) were promised "secrecy" (most of them actually were not), but quite frankly, how could you promise a public document would be kept secret? How could a government prohibit a certain group of citizens from having the same access to a public document that others do? And, most of all, why would anyone think that the baby, the owner of said birth certificate, agreed to such a thing?

In the states that have opened their records, less than 1% of the parents did not want contact with their children. And, even in some of those cases, other members of the family did want contact. In no case in any state did any parent bring a harassment case or ask for a protective order to prevent a child from contacting them again. All they had to do was tell the now adult daughter or son that they did not want contact and that was that. Why shouldn't the laws be changed to reflect that at least 99% of birth families (mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, cousins) want to know their flesh and blood relatives? The newspapers seem to love reporting stories of family reunions. Might I point out that such reunions could take place more frequently and with a lot less trouble if you just allowed adoptees the exact same access to THEIR birth certificates that the rest of us have? Then we wouldn't be reading about how finally, after decades of searching, the family members finally found one another. Instead, those lost decades would be spent together with each other.

Please give adult adoptees that access. It is truly the right and fair thing to do.

Thank you for your attention,
Beth Finchler
Stamford, CT