

Shirley Hattayer HB 5144

2-26-14

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

I am writing to ask for your **support** of Raised Bill 5144, An Act Concerning Access to Birth Certificates and Parental Health Information for Adoptive Persons.

I strongly believe that ALL adult adoptees should have access to their original birth certificates, and that the bill should be both **retroactive** and **prospective**.

The times have changed since those born in Connecticut lost the right to access Original Birth Certificates in 1974. Rhode Island granted access to original birth certificates recently, and Connecticut is not the only state with the same bill currently in process. Since you will be inundated with many paragraphs in other letters and emails, I only ask this of you: If you are undecided, or tempted to vote “No” please ask someone you know personally, an adopted adult friend or relative, if they have or want their original birth certificate, and what their opinion is. Or, walk up to anyone you know and ask them if they know what happens to a birth certificate when a child is adopted. Ask them if they know that the adoptive parent’s names replace the birth parent’s names and a new, altered birth certificate is issued. Then ask them if they think the child should be able to get a copy of their original birth certificate.

I have asked these same questions of many people. Most people with no connection to adoption have no idea that birth certificates are ever changed, with the “real” one sealed away forever, and they express shock when I inform them of the process. I’ve never met ANYONE who opposes access to original birth certificates. One parting question for you to consider: If you have YOUR Original Birth Certificate, how would you honestly feel if you didn’t, and couldn’t get it?

Please pass Raised Bill 5144. Thank-you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Shirley Hattayer

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