
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5408

AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH RECORDS BY ADULT ADOPTED PERSONS.

SUMMARY

This bill expands access to birth certificates for adopted persons and their adult children or grandchildren.

Current law requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to give adopted individuals age 18 or older whose adoptions were finalized on or after October 1, 1983, or their adult children or grandchildren, uncertified copies of the adoptee's original birth certificate upon request. The bill requires DPH to do so regardless of the finalized adoption date.

To conform to this change, the bill eliminates a provision allowing those adopted before October 1, 1983, and their adult children or grandchildren, to obtain uncertified copies of the original certificate through a court order. Under current law, if the birth parents are alive, the court can only issue such an order with their consent, or in certain circumstances, the consent of a legal representative or guardian ad litem.

The bill extends by three years, from 2021 to 2024, the requirement that the DPH and Department of Children and Families (DCF) commissioners report annually to the Public Health Committee on the number of adult adoptee birth certificates issued by DPH and birth parent contact preference and health history forms filed with DCF, respectively (see BACKGROUND).

The bill also makes conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2018

BACKGROUND

Adoptee Birth Certificates

In most cases, DPH seals the original birth certificate when a court notifies it that a child born in Connecticut has been adopted. It prepares a new certificate substituting the adoptive parents' names for those appearing on the original certificate (CGS § 7-53).

Contact Preference and Health History Forms

By law, a biological parent may voluntarily complete a DCF form indicating whether he or she wants to be contacted by his or her adopted adult child or the adoptee's adult children or grandchildren. When receiving a request for a contact preference form, DCF must also provide the parent with a form on which to record his or her health history information (CGS § 17a-60a).

When issuing an original birth certificate, DPH must provide a notice stating that these completed contact and health history forms may be on file with DCF.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 24 Nay 16 (04/04/2018)