

Dear Legislators,

As an adoptee born in the state of Illinois, I am writing to express my support of S.B. 972. In 2010, Illinois passed legislation that allowed adult adoptees to obtain a copy of their Original Birth Certificates (OBC). I, like many other adult adoptees was able to obtain a copy of my OBC through this law. I cannot express to you the emotions I felt being able to see for the first time the actual hospital that I was born in. My Amended Birth Certificate (ABC) only listed the city I was born in, and not know this very basic fact of my own birth, the hospital I was born in, It was difficult not knowing. I cannot tell you how many times I'd been asked which hospital i'd been born in, having to explain that I didn't know because I was adopted and the state redacted this information on my ABC.

In 2013, I learned of the new law in Illinois granting OBC access to adoptees. I applied, and was sent a copy of by my OBC with un-redacted details of my own birth. Because my mother had died in 2001, I never knew that she named me upon my birth. I never knew that I had a name and identity before my adoption, a history. I was born Kimberly Jayne Linn, and at last I knew where I was born.

For the non-adopted this may see like a small unimportant detail, but for an adopted individual it is so much more, its your identity before adoption.

Often legislators will hear from adoption agencies and adoption attorneys that the sky will fall if adoptees are granted access to this simple piece of paper. That just isn't the case. The sky did not fall, life did not stop when my OBC arrived in the mail. No ones life was disrupted. In fact the exact opposite happened, I gained a sense of peace and felt like I finally had an identity before my adoption. Everyone's life starts on page one, except if you're adopted then your life starts on page two. Page one being sealed by the state.

Many states like Illinois, New Jersey, Ohio, Hawaii, and Indiana have passed legislation in recent years grating adoptees this basic human right. The human right to access to their OBC like all other citizens. Please work to add Connecticut to this growing list.

Respectfully,

Tracy Aabey-Hammond