

Testimony on SB 972

Paul Acker

March 15, 2019

Distinguished members of the committee, my name is Paul Acker, I'm a registered voter in the town of Portland and an adoptee who has made contact with my biological family. I am writing today in support of SB 972 so that all adoptees can have equal rights under the law.

As I am positive you have heard from other adoptees, for most of my life there was a huge hole in my life story. At times feeling like I was in a parallel universe, but most times feeling incomplete. I have gone through phases of not caring about it and phases deep wonderment.

As a person who was adopted in Massachusetts, I have always had the right to search, but was limited by only being able to use the adoption agency for the search. This process was painful and frustrating as the agencies had no dedicated staff to conduct the search. It felt like they took the fee and didn't put effort into the search. In the mid nineties I did such a search and the results were so painful and incomplete I swore I would never search again.

In October of last year, my wife was watching a show where they used DNA testing to unite adoptees with their long-lost families. I was uncomfortable during the show, as the topic hit too close to home. In frustration I typed my mother's name and her college which I had gained access to decades before and the first link was her obituary. It had mentioned her four children and after some searching on the internet and of my soul, I sent message to someone who turned out to be my full sister.

Between then and the present I have been blessed to get to know her and her incredible family. As we have talked, so much of my story has been able to be back filled and the feeling of being incomplete that I have carried within me through my whole life is gone. Questions now have answers. I have not met the rest of my siblings, I'm the oldest of five, but that's okay because the deep chasm of wonder has been filled. For Christmas, my sister gave me a report that traced our family roots back to the founding of this country.

I know every story will not have a happy ending, but I believe each person should have the equal right to fulfill their human desire to feel complete. Connecticut's law treats adoptees unequally depending solely on the time you were adopted. As technology has changed the landscape as to what is possible, I believe strongly Connecticut needs to align our laws accepting the new realities and to promote equality for all our citizens.

Thank you for your time.