

Support for S.B. 972

I am writing to ask you to support and pass Senate Bill 972, The 2019 Adoptee Rights Bill.

Although I currently live in New York, I was born and grew up in Connecticut, where my immediate family spent their entire lives. I am a birthmother. My son was born and surrendered for adoption in New London in 1969. When I began my search for him as he approached the age of 18, I did so to assure that he was all right. When I decided to contact him, I did so to hopefully enhance his life and to provide any information he might desire or need. If we were to have further contact or a relationship, it would be his choice. He has been back in my life for nearly 25 years.

There are many arguments for allowing adoptees to have access to their birth records, such as, supplying important medical information; and I could offer anecdotal evidence as to their validity, such as, when I answered many questions to help my son's doctor diagnose some perplexing symptoms. However, I think that the most poignant testimony I can set forth occurred on the day he and I first met in person, five years after our initial contact, five years of letters and phone calls. As was his choice, we met in New London, "the city where I was born". I told him he could ask me anything. His first request? "Tell me about the day I was born." He said that he had heard his mother tell his siblings about their birth-days but she couldn't tell him about his. It was obviously very important to him. I was surprised that this was the foremost thought of a 25 year old single guy who had a close relationship with his family and shared many memories with them. But I shouldn't have been.

Telling stories and hearing stories has always been an essential part of human interaction and connection. Our personal stories are a vital part of this. Those stories consist of many chapters and pieces. The earliest of them establish our sense of self and lay a foundation for who we become. We who grew up in our birth families take this for granted. We don't have to wonder. We know. Why shouldn't adoptees be afforded the same? Knowing your origins doesn't negate the rest of your experience. Rather it provides another of the pieces that altogether make you your whole. Shouldn't we want that for everyone?

It is within your power to grant this to adoptees. I urge you to do so.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Maureen Boyle