

I am writing urging your support of SB 972. I am the adoptive mother of a nearly 50 old son, whom we adopted when he was an infant under Costa Rican law. We lived in that country at the time. He became a naturalized US citizen in Hartford after he had lived here with us for the commensurate 2 years. He was then three years old.

Costa Rica has a very open adoption system based on the belief that the more open laws were, the less the chance for corruption. Therefore, when my son was ready, as an adult of 30, to find out about his adoptive family, all he had to do was ask. We had in our possession at all times his original birth and baptismal certificates and enough information about his birth family that it was not difficult to search and to find them, with some Costa Rican investigative assistance. That family had a right to say yes or no to contact with my son; mercifully for all concerned they said yes. It was a vital affirmation that has meant a great deal to his mental health. It has also created close relationships with a birth sister, his birth mother, half siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles, most of whom knew of his existence but thought they had lost him forever. Thanks to the internet, he is in contact with myriad family members and has visited them several times.

We always believed that it was his right to know his birth identity and his story, as best we knew it. It was also his right to know his original name and to have access to birth and medical records. It was with amazement and gratitude for the Costa Rican system that I listened to stories of closed adoption records in this country and in Connecticut. Over the years, there has been vast improvement. This one more step of assuring that all Connecticut adult adoptees have access to their original birth certificates is a vital step toward creating a system that is good for all concerned. Thank you for your support of Senate Bill 972 and for all you do on behalf of Connecticut's birth parents, adoptive parents and their adoptive adult children.

Sincerely yours,

Virginia Fulton

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