

I am writing to ask you to support S.B. 972, allowing adult adoptees to receive their original birth certificate. The true facts of your own birth should be everyone's right, not just those who were raised by their original families.

I relinquished a son to adoption in 1979. At that time, there was still deep societal scorn on pregnant, unmarried women. I enrolled at the Florence Crittenton Maternity Home, with full expectation of privacy *at the time of my pregnancy*, to try to avoid that scorn. That is the *only* privacy that was desired, implied, and/or promised - privacy from the public finding out that I was pregnant/had a child. *I was not promised, nor did I ever want, anonymity from the child born of that pregnancy.* The same is said by the many other natural mothers I have come to know in the last ten years of activity in adoption support groups.

There are several statistics that show the number of mothers who welcome contact with their adult children lost to adoption range between 95 and 98 percent. I fully believe that the few mothers who do not want contact would welcome their adult children if not for the deep seated shame that was put on her by society at the time of her pregnancy. We were told to "forget this child", to "go on with your lives as though this didn't happen" and "one day you will have children of your own". We were told to not tell anyone lest we be judged as "unworthy" or "less than" by any possible future husband. Let's not make these mothers feel that these beliefs are true by continuing the falsehood of "birth mother privacy". To be able to continue this secrecy (that we were made to believe was necessary) is not a strong enough reason to keep vital records from the very person they most effect - the adopted.

"Birth mother privacy", even if it was true, can no longer be assumed in this age of DNA testing. Such testing is now easily and affordably accessible. DNA testing actually makes a birth mother's personal history anything but personal. Through DNA testing, adoptees are being matched to 2nd, 3rd, 4th cousins. They then make contact with these distant relatives in hopes of learning the identity of their natural mother or father. If that adopted adult had been able to know the names from their original birth certificate, reaching out to the distant relatives would be unnecessary. The expectation of societal privacy would not be jeopardized.

Since the early 1980's, the world's attitudes about adoption and secrecy have moved towards openness. I ask that you please help Connecticut move into the future and end the unequal treatment of the adopted. Please vote in support of

S.B. 972 and allow adopted adults the same rights to their original birth certificate as everyone else in the state!

Sincerely,  
Susie Gill