

## Support for S.B. 972

I gave birth to my son in 1967..an age when contraception was illegal and millions of us “unwed mothers” were caught up in an era when guilt and shame ruled. We were forced to give birth in secret and to give our babies away. We were told to forget and get on with our lives. I grieved for 50 years for a child I knew lived and breathed but was unknown to me. I could not hold him or kiss him or protect him. I prayed that he was with a family who would.

Fortunately my son had such a family. In spite of that fact he yearned for me, his first Mother, his birth Mother. He needed to know who I was so he could know who he is. He had hundreds of questions...the most heartbreaking of all ...Why did you desert me? Why did you abandon me? Why did you give me up? Our children deserve to know the answers to this question and hundreds more. It is our duty and responsibility to give them the answers to any and all questions they may have. They have an absolute right to their birth records so they may find us and get to know us and to be loved by us. Denying this right is discrimination of one's most basic birth right...to know who one is.

The state should have no interest in “protecting” me or other birth parents by denying the rights of our children access to their original birth certificates. It is an insult to me to deny my son the right to find me. You certainly are not protecting me. The most liberating thing to happen to me was the reunion between my child and me. I have heard the argument that this body is protecting the anonymity of those birth moms who choose not to be found. It is totally wrong and unjust to deny a persons basic rights on the backs of those adults who refuse to take responsibility for bringing a child into this world, no matter how unjust those circumstances were. Two wrongs never makes things right...it only perpetuated the injustice. I implore you to pass SB 972 so that other sons and daughters can find their Moms and so that all parties can begin to heal from a wrenching experience that took place decades ago in less enlightened times.

Thank you for your consideration  
Ellen Grusse