

*Jeff Hancock, Board of Directors, Adoptee Rights Coalition RE: Senate Bill 972*

Subject: Senate Bill 972  
To: Members of the Planning & Development Committee  
Date: March 10, 2019

Dear Members of the Planning & Development Committee,

Presently there is a vital piece of legislation awaiting approval on behalf of the good people of Connecticut. My reason for writing to your committee is to request your support of Bill 972, which will provide all adoptive persons with equal access to their Original Birth Certificates as well as parental health information. When this bill is ratified, Connecticut will join the ranks of other progressive states including: Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Oregon, Wyoming, Hawaii, and Alabama. Similarly, there are a good number of states with proposed bills just like 972 awaiting passage.

Legislation such as Bill 972 is very important to me on a personal level. As an adoptee I firmly believe that ALL adult adoptees should have unrestricted access to our Original Birth Certificates (OBCs). As such, I believe that your bill should be both retroactive as well as prospective. I fit into the category of adult adoptees known "a Late-Discovery-Adoptee." I was 42-years-old when I was stunned to learn that I was adopted as a small child. I was even more shocked and horrified to learn that as an adoptee my OBC was sealed away and is considered a "state secret" denying me access to my very own identity.

Why this matters is because without access to our history our lives are in peril. Medical history is vital for any human being to be aware of. However, adoptees are denied this privilege. I discovered this the hard way in 2011 when my lack of family medical history proved to be near fatal as I experienced life-changing surgery. Additionally, the lack of medical history has also placed my children at a higher risk as well. Sadly, this is a far too common occurrence for adult adoptees and for our children as well.

Furthermore it is urgent that Senate Bill 972 be passed in order to provide adult adoptees with the exact same human rights that all non-adopted adults possess. Sealed OBCs by design treat all adopted people as 2<sup>nd</sup> class citizens within the states we are born into. When state governments deny adult adoptees access to the only piece of paper that contains our true identity, a human rights injustice has occurred.

I strongly encourage your committee to do that which is right on behalf of Connecticut's adopted citizens. Only the very best of things happen when all humans are granted equality through their state governments.

Sincerely,

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