

To: Members of the Planning & Development Committee

As a birth mother I write in support of SB972 the 2019 Adoptee Rights Bill.

In 1961 I was pregnant and unwed, a situation that was not acceptable to our society. And so, out of desperation and not choice I relinquished my son to adoption. Catholic Family Services told me I was doing the right thing for my child. They told me I never had to talk about it again and in time I would forget. They told me that my son would have access to his birth records when he became of legal age. They were wrong all three accounts.

First I never believed it was the right thing to do. Second, while I never spoke of it again still I never forgot my child. A mother never forgets. And, third because the state sealed the records in the 1980's and sealed them retroactively my son was unable to have access to his birth records.

Therefore, for 40 years I was a prisoner of my own silence, my own lies and deceit until I finally realized the road to redemption had to start with the truth. I broke the horrific silence, searched for and found my son in 2002. I gave him all of the information to which he had a right. He was able to meet his grandparents before their death, and also he was able to meet his father.

Today I urge you to give adult adopted persons, including my son, the right to their original birth certificates. To amend a birth certificate does not change who you are, and I believe it is arrogant for any of us to assume we have a right to steal and seal away a person's identity. This deception is the original sin of adoption. It creates the lie, the lie causes the fear and that fear contributes to the pain of all of the parties involved in adoption. And so I ask you to please do the right thing and pass this bill because every person has the right to his/her identity - it is the first right, it is the natural right for all persons.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Hook