



Brunel University London

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13 March 2019

Members of the Planning & Development Committee

State Capitol

Hartford, CT 06106-1562

Dear Members,

I am submitting a second letter in order to ask for your support of Senate Bill 972 based on a headline in *The New York Times* today.

In my previous letter, I stated that:

I would think that all members of the adoption triad, adopted persons, birth parents, and adopted parents would prefer that contact be made through this process (open access). In other cases, adopted persons and birth relatives are being connected through social media like FaceBook and through genetic testing like AncestryDNA or 23andMe. In both these cases, it might be persons outside of the triad who make the connection with the adopted person or birth parent. Any chance of privacy or confidentiality, in these cases, flies out the window.

Today's headline is "A Dead Baby Was Found in a Ditch in 1981. DNA Helped Charge the Mother With Murder." The mother was identified by 'DNA testing and genealogy databases' Further it states that the baby's DNA was sent to a lab to identify potential 'suspects and relatives'. The mother was identified by DNA attached to household items found in her trash can. This research helped to 'unspool members of a family tree' with the use of GEDMatch.com, Ancestry.com and findagrave.com.

In today's world, there are no secrets. As an adopted person, before making contact with some of my half-siblings over a decade ago, I was able to locate them on social networking sites. I was also able to locate their children and grandchildren. In this past decade since reunion, it has become even easier to locate people.

As I state, reunion should be between members of the adoption triad. Members should not be 'outed' against their will by utilizing the technologies so easily available to unspool secrets and family trees. Privacy, confidentiality, and consent are all necessary for the delicate accomplishment of reunion.

Open access to birth records allows members of the adoption triad to communicate with each other directly. It takes away the need of any member to utilize social media/networking or DNA testing.



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This is a link to the article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/12/us/sioux-falls-baby-theresa-bentaas.html?action=click&module=Latest&pgtype=Homepage>

I have been involved with similar successful legislation in Pennsylvania and New Jersey and would be happy to answer any questions you might have regarding Senate Bill 972 or my position as a healthcare provider and healthcare educator. I am very hopeful that the Members of the Planning & Development Committee will support this bill and help move it to an affirmative vote.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D. Leonard".

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