

Dear Members of the Planning and Development Committee,

I thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in strong support of Senate Bill 972, An Act Concerning Access To Original Birth Records By Adult Adopted Persons.

I support adult adoptees' rights to access their records without restrictions or qualifications. Knowing one's identity is a civil right which is being consistently abused by the practice of sealed records adoptions. All human beings have the right to know their original identity which includes their genetic roots, their medical history and biological history.

I spent many years living in silence about the truth that I gave birth to my daughter and relinquished her to adoption. I did not experience this silence as protection, but as perpetuation of the shame inflicted by me on a society that rejected me as a woman and as a mother. I am silent no longer.

I know that some of my sisters may still be living in secrecy. I grieve for these women, who have no idea of the joy they may be missing. While that is their choice, modern technology is foreclosing this option.

Consumer testing makes public exposure of birth parents much more likely than providing an adoptee with his or her original birth certificate. An adoptee with his or her original birth certificate (and his/her birth parent's name) can make a sensitive, personal and private contact. An adoptee who takes a DNA test has revealed the birth parent's identity to every biological relative who also took a DNA test. These relatives learn about a birth parent's status before the birth parent knows he or she is being sought. On a purely practical level, original birth certificate access is the better option.

Sincerely,

Sally Macke, Birthparent