

I urge you to pass Senate Bill 972: The 2019 Adoptee Rights Bill. I believe every person has the right to information about himself or herself.

I am a 60-year-old birth mother. I never asked for nor wanted the confidentiality purported as a central argument of opponents to this bill. Furthermore, I propose the argument that adoption laws protect birth mothers is propaganda.

In 1975, my social worker collected my address as well as the names and addresses of my neighborhood high school and my grandparents. I was told this was to protect me and that my baby girl would not be placed in any of these areas. Imagine my surprise six years ago when, upon reuniting with my 37-year-old daughter, I learned that she grew up only blocks from my high school, less than a mile from my home, that she spent her first five years attending the same church and even the same mass as me, and that her children were in high school with my nieces. We both felt violated that we were so close so often and didn't know it. One of her first questions to me inquired about whether I was related to her husband's family. She easily could have inadvertently married a cousin, but surprisingly, she didn't.

Reunion relationships are complicated. Still, I have no regrets. I am grateful for the opportunity to tell my daughter her beginning story, share her medical history with her, and hear about her life experiences. For me, reunion was healing. Today, I am a mentoring adult in her life, speaking with her regularly and sharing in her life. At times she asks for more than I can give, but I don't need the state to protect me from her. I am an adult who is fully capable of protecting myself and setting my own boundaries when and if that is needed.

In my opinion, as a birth mother, there is no reason to deny adopted adult citizens access to their original birth certificates. Please, support Senate Bill 972.

Sincerely,

Michelle McIntyre