

Last year I wrote asking you to support Senate Bill 972 to restore the right of adult adoptees born and adopted before October 1, 1983 to obtain their original birth certificate. I asked because I am an adoptee and like so many of us we'd like to have information and medical history of our birth parents. I strongly feel all adoptees deserve to be treated the same as any other citizen. By supporting this bill it would also benefit our children as well. We live with the uncertainty of underlying health conditions that possibly could be prevented. As a woman, I have had to undergo extra medical screenings, at my own expense, to protect myself. Please take a moment to think how your life would be impacted if you were in that position. Time has changed the way adoption is viewed and there is no longer the stigmatism associated with it today. When I originally contacted the adoption agency that handled my adoption I was told it would cost me \$500+ and I'd need to be seen by a psychiatrist before they would even consider doing a search. They said they could not guarantee that they would be able to give me any of that information in the end either. It's wrong to charge or withhold any information that should be rightfully ours as a human being. It's discrimination and my/our rights are being denied.

Since my request last year, I have done Ancestry DNA testing. I found I had a lot of matches connected to my DNA. I used a third cousin match family tree as well as information I located on the internet and found my birth mother. It's unfortunate that she had to have died in order to find her. I can only imagine being able to have had a conversation and perhaps a relationship with her. It was heartbreaking that I had missed that opportunity by four months. I since petitioned the State of Connecticut and have finally received my original birth certificate. All this was accompanied by numerous telephone calls, paperwork and additional fees. It's important to add that I also contacted the adoption agency that to this day will not give me my original adoption paperwork (without whitening out certain information) because there is a name of a potential birth father on it. I question how they would still have any binding contract with anyone that had not signed that original adoption document. Why would anyone that was not present, at any time, during the signing of said document have any rights? Yet I'm still denied all the information I deserve to have.

It's becoming a very popular alternative and many are having their DNA tested. People are making connections, doing searches and finding out about themselves. There will always be those who are open to this and those who will not. It should be a person's individual journey. This should never have been a government decision nor should it cost adoptees money in the process. This is your opportunity to change things before everyone loses their chance to reconnect.

So I'm asking you once again, please support Senate Bill 972 so that other adoptees like myself can access their original birth certificate.

Kathleen K. Mowchan