

Support for Senate Bill 972

Greetings, my name is Susanna Petrie. My birth name is Erica June Reynolds and I was born in Norwalk CT on Sept 15th, 1966. I was given up for adoption at birth as was my older brother John Belcher who was born 11 months before me. Our mother was a young woman who had just come over from Northern Ireland to be a nanny. At the time she gave us up, she did so with the understanding that when we turned 18 we would have access to our birth certificates. Unbeknownst to us, because we were children at the time, this right was stripped from us in the early 1970s. We are now the ONLY class of people in Connecticut who are denied our original birth certificates. I had to pay \$225 to petition the court for my birth certificate when it should have been available to me, especially in light of the fact that I know my birth name and both my birth parent's names. **THIS IS WRONG!!!!**

The discrimination has far reaching effect for my family. John and I finally found each other and found our birth family via DNA testing sites like Ancestry DNA and 23andme. However, it took me THIRTY years of searching to find my birth family. My birth father has passed away so I completely missed out on knowing him. Furthermore, in part because of the 30-year delay, my birth mother wants nothing to do with us. She was under the impression that we had our certificates for all those years and choose not to search for her so she hardened her heart against us. We found her the last week of 2016, and now at the age of 74 she refuses to have anything to do with us. I have been robbed of a relationship with both of my birth parents. **THIS IS WRONG!!!!**

Lastly, because my birth mother was born in Northern Ireland, I am automatically a citizen as so are my children. This would be a wonderful thing for us to be able to realize this birth right. Unfortunately, in order for this to happen, we need certified copies of my mother's identification we will never get. My son lives in the UK and is going to university over there. He is paying international tuition rates, having to apply for student visas, and student loans when in fact he should be a citizen. **THIS IS WRONG!!!**

Please pass Senate Bill 972 assuring that all adopted people have access to their original birth certificates. It is a tad too late for our family, but for many others, it could spare them a lot of pain. We ALL deserve this information!!

I urge you in the strongest language possible to pass this bill **THIS SEASON!!!!**

Thank you
Susanna Petrie