

Support for S.B. 972

Hello,

I am a birthmother who relinquished in 1994. After holding my breath for 22 years, I am now in reunion with my daughter and we are incredibly relieved and happy to be in each other's lives again. I also have a wonderful relationship with her adoptive parents.

After finally reuniting, she had stated how important it was to her to know me, however, she resents the years of secrets and lies. I, of course, have ALWAYS wanted her in my life. Unfortunately, I was just a naive college student at the time and wasn't offered help, legal guidance or counseling, instead a private adoption was arranged for me. In the hospital, the rules of birth certificates were never explained to me. Like most birthmothers, I believed I was giving up my rights for 18 years, not a life time. As has been proven over and over again, DNA cannot be denied and knowing our history and roots is vital to mental health, security and a sense of self. I wanted desperately to keep her but was given no other options and much of the adoption process was manipulated to benefit the adoptive parents. I never once considered a closed adoption, I believe those are extinct.

At no time have I ever wanted to remain anonymous. Also, never have I met a fellow birthmother that didn't want to know their child. Indeed, it is the opposite, we all eagerly wait for their 18th birthday praying their adoptive parents give them the information they promised they would. Instead, like in my case and MANY other cases, I was kept a secret and my letters were hidden until she accidentally found them on her own when she was an older adult. Had she had access to her original birth certificate, she would have had to opportunity to know me even sooner. Time is precious and should not be squandered.

I stand with fellow birthmothers and adoptees in support of SB 972. Adoptees have a right to their truth and the birthparents' identity. If we change the culture, perhaps more adoptive families will look at their adoptive children less as possessions, but instead real people entitled to the joy and relief of their truth. Please do the right thing and give adoptees the visual confirmation that adoptees have a valid and important history that started before "gotcha day".

Feel free to contact should you have any questions,

-Jeannie Stadler

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