

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to encourage a "yes" vote on SB 972.

I am an adult adoptee who has been involved with leading a search, support and advocacy organization in Colorado for more than 20 years. During the past 40+ years, our organization has seen a series of cautious, incremental changes in the law, culminating in a 2009 Court of Appeals ruling that created a "sandwich" law much like that of Connecticut today, with varying degrees of access depending on the date on which the adoption was finalized.

Finally, in 2014-2015, the Colorado legislature responded to the following points presented by advocates, and aligned the state statute with truth and transparency for all adoptions, no matter when they were finalized. The Colorado General Assembly and then-Governor Hickenlooper recognized that similarly situated people were being treated differently under the law, and voted unanimously to restore access to the original birth certificate and certain adoption records to adult adoptees; birth parents; adult descendants of the adoptee; and adult siblings who were wards of the state separated by adoption or foster care. By comparison, SB 972 is a much less sweeping, almost conservative step. This overwhelming support came from recognition of the following talking points:

- Truth and transparency, not shame and secrecy, should be the primary principle guiding adoption policy and practice.
- Confidentiality from the general public is essential, but anonymity among adult parties is an antiquated, unhealthy standard.
- The interests of adoptees and birth/first parents are not at odds. Though these relationships are often complicated, citizens are generally capable of sorting things out without state supervision or intervention.
- Leading national child welfare, legal and stakeholder organizations all support this policy.

The results in Colorado? Some 5000 requests for records have been processed with no reported serious negative outcomes. Please feel free to contact the interim CDPHE Vital Records Supervisor at 303/692-2225 for additional details.

I welcome any further questions and urge your "aye" vote on SB 972.

Best Regards,  
Rich Uhrlaub, M.Ed.  
President

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Adoption Search Resource Connection (ASRC)