

Dear Senators and Representatives of the Connecticut legislature,

My name is Moses Farrow. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter of granting adoptees access to their original birth certificates. As an adoptee, I have come to realize how important my voice is and have had to overcome personal, professional and social challenges to speak up for myself and other adoptees. I have been working as a Marriage and Family Therapist for almost 2 decades, most of which has been here in Connecticut. During my career, I have been a program manager for the Intensive Family Preservation program as well as a program coordinator for a private adoption agency. Professionally, I've dedicated myself to helping and supporting the children and families living here in this state. One thing that experience taught me was the power of connection as well as the undeniable trauma that comes with loss and separation. Unresolved - potentially unresolvable - grief lasts a lifetime. Sometimes, and in my opinion, too often, suicide is the outcome.

I am a survivor of the deaths of three of my siblings, all were adopted. I am also a father of two children. With the help of loved ones, I have come to appreciate and deeply understand just how important it is to know oneself. For a child, this means starting from the beginning with the question "where did I come from?" For adoptees, this is not an easy question to answer. Simply because we don't know, because the people in our lives aren't always there when we're born and very rarely able to witness our birth. The lack of knowing fuels our desire to find out. How can we go through life, let alone feel whole, without knowing where we came from? It eats away at us. We now know the devastating effects trauma has on the mind and body. For many, it's a trauma we never really fully understand. So, I owe it to my children to try. I owe it to the future generations of my family. I accept the burden of healing from my trauma now so they won't have to. They already have so much to face ahead of them. I often tell other parents to ask themselves "how do you want to tell the story of this moment 20 years from now with your children?" I certainly remember the moments throughout my life that have helped shape who I am and the people who made those moments possible. From their example, I've learned to embrace connection and in turn embrace life. I urge you to consider making the passing of SB 113 a pivotal moment for adoptees in their journey of healing and not have them pass the burden onto their children.

All it takes is one person to save someone from dying by suicide and to begin the healing process. Just one human connection. For adoptees, the connection with themselves means the difference between a life of healing or a life of despair caught in the cycle of not knowing. I have seen it, lived with it in my now dead siblings. My brother was 27 when he shot himself. My sister died by suicide during the last semester of my senior year of college. My other sister died at the age of 37 leaving behind two daughters. This is personal for me. It's about honoring their lives and helping them raise their voices in hopes it will get this bill passed. When I think about this bill and my siblings, as well as the hundreds of children and families I've served as a therapist, I believe that by passing SB 113, you will be saving lives.

With gratitude and hope,

Moses Farrow