



Concerned United Birthparents, Inc.
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In support of SENATE BILL 113, AN ACT CONCERNING ACCESS TO ORIGINAL BIRTH RECORDS BY ADULT ADOPTED PERSONS

February 18, 2020

To Members of the Planning & Development Committee,

On behalf of Concerned United Birthparents (CUB), we thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in **strong support** of Senate Bill 113, An Act Concerning Access to Original Birth Records By Adult Adopted Persons.

[CUB supports adult adoptees' right to access their records, without restrictions or qualifications.](#) Knowing one's identity is a civil right which is being consistently abused by the practice of sealed records adoptions. All human beings have the right to know their original identity which includes their genetic roots, their medical history and biological history. While the vast majority of birthparents want to be reunited with their adult children, in the end, this is not relevant. An adoptee's right to his birth certificate is absolute.

CUB was founded in 1976. We are an organization developed to support parents who have relinquished a child to adoption. We are known for our tireless work in adoption reform for more than forty years. For too many of these years, lawmakers have spoken for us without asking our opinion, and made assumptions about us without examining the evidence. They assume we don't want a voice; we don't want a choice; and we are happy in the shadows. We are not. This misguided attempt to "protect our privacy" actually perpetuates the shame that was originally inflicted on us by a society that rejected us as women and mothers. We are silent no longer.

The myth of confidentiality promised to a birthparent, is often used to oppose open records. That premise is ludicrous. Since "we" are the population being spoken for, we would like to set the record straight once and for all. Birthparents were never promised confidentiality, nor did we ask for it. Please refer to the research done by Elizabeth J. Samuels, professor of law at the University of Maryland who [submitted testimony](#) last session. ([Surrender and Subordination: Birth Mothers and Adoption Law Reform](#), 20 Mich. J. Gender & L. 33 (2013)). There has never been a single document presented that supports this myth of confidentiality. The experience of other states that have opened their records indicates that more than 99 percent of birthparents are open to contact by their surrendered adult children.

For those still concerned about "protecting our privacy", consumer DNA testing makes public exposure of birth parents much more likely than providing an adoptee with his original birth certificate. An adoptee with his original birth certificate (and his birth parent's name) can make a sensitive, personal and private contact. An adoptee who takes a DNA test has revealed the birth parent's identity to every biological relative who also took a DNA test. These relatives learn about a birth parent's status before the birth parent knows he or she is being sought. On a purely practical level, original birth certificate access is the better option.

Sincerely,

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