

## **Letter in support of Original Birth Certificate Access for Adult Adoptees S.B 113 To the Connecticut Legislature From Texas Adoptee Rights (STAR)**

To the Honorable Members of the Connecticut Legislature,

Texas Adoptee Rights urges you to support S.B 113, legislation which will restore access for adult adoptees to their original birth certificates (OBCs). Though we are fighting in Texas, as is true for any minority group, what elevates adoptees in one state impacts us all.

Adoptees across the country are educating legislators and their staff about the changes the 21st century has ushered in for adoptees. DNA is successfully and frequently connecting families, but in very public ways. A surprising result of current social and technological advances, is that sealed records jeopardizes privacy, while restoring adoptee access to their own records enhances privacy.

The above mentioned point is counter-intuitive to those from past decades. However, because of social media and commercial DNA testing, adoptees utilizing these tools are inadvertently alerting extended family *before* connecting to their birth parents. Fortunately, research does show that birth parents typically want to be found, however most would prefer a one-on-one meeting to start, as is also true for most adoptees.. This gives them the opportunity to inform their family after the initial meeting, rather than having their family find out through social media. Sealed records makes that discreet meeting much less likely since a more public approach to search was necessary.

The other consideration is that although some are interested in finding those familial connections, others need their birth certificates for reasons not solved or satiated by a reunion. As long as records are sealed a reunion is the only way adoptees impacted by sealed records can get their information. An adoptee should not have to engage in a reunion just to get their most basic of personal information pertaining to themselves.

Restoring access for adult adoptees to their original birth certificates is restoring dignity to persons who were adopted. As an adopted person I can attest to the positive impact that obtaining my most basic information has had on my identity, my medical care, and my sense of well-being. It also restores equally under the law for adult adoptees, finally removing the shame and stigma in adoption left over from a bygone era. Thank you for your close study of this important issue. Please vote yes on S.B 113.

Sincerely,

Joellen Peters, PhD  
Board President  
Texas Adoptee Rights  
[www.txadopteerights.org](http://www.txadopteerights.org)