

To the Honorable Planning and Development Committee Members;

I am writing in support of SB113, restoring access to all Connecticut adoptees. Please support and pass this long overdue piece of legislation. Odds are you have heard this issue before. You have heard how openness and honesty in adoption is so much healthier for all those involved. You have heard that family medical history is imperative for preventative and proactive health care and diagnosis for adoptees and non adoptees. You have heard that treating one class of people differently under the law sends that group the message that they are lesser than. I could give you examples of every argument you've heard on this topic embedded in my own adoption story. In fact, I have written it all to you for years and years. This is the year to pass this bill.

Today I will tell you, if not for us - the older adoptees from another century. If not for those who have written to you for their rights for decades, then please, restore access for our children - for the next generation. Grant us our information so we may share it with our most cherished, our children. They too live with an incomplete sense of self. They too live without their full medical history. The children of adoptees, both minors and adults are excluded from conversations about their full heritage and feel our "otherness" in their everyday conversations, too because they are also impacted. This loss of genetic information is generational. This discrimination extends beyond adoptees themselves, but we bear the burden of guilt in not being able to give our children their full identity.

When the practice of sealing records went into effect the consequences were unknown. The benefits, a mere hypothesis. It is safe to say, many decades later. upon reflection, there are a plethora of unintended and detrimental consequences, the benefits never coming to fruition. They are just not born out in the data, both past and present.

Sealed records has prolonged the shame and stigma, propagated by society and felt by adoptees. It is has left adoptive parents without the tools they need to effectively and safely raise their children. It has banished [birth] parents to a lifetime of wondering and often decades of devastating heartache.

Please end this senseless state of shame and secrecy that not only impacts adoptees, but impacts their children, and those that love them.

Sincerely,

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"How can we know who we are and where we are going if we don't know anything about where we have come from and what we have been through, the courage shown, the costs paid, to be where we are?" -David McCullough