

Please support and pass SB 113. The adoptees of Connecticut deserve to know who they are, where they are from. This bill will grant them the power to learn that.

I speak from personal experience. I am a reunited adoptee. Long ago, after years of searching, I found my birth mother and 9 sisters and brothers. I met my grandmother. At the age of 29, I learned who I was, I learned my name, I became complete, and for the first time in my life, I looked like someone. My sense of longing and loss, of not knowing the most basic facts of my own life, finally subsided.

All adoptees deserve that same opportunity. They, too, have the right to know who they are. They, too, need to know who their birth mothers are.

You can grant them this right and fulfill that need.

There are those who say that the agreements made decades ago must be carved in stone, that birth mothers fear meeting the children they relinquished. My birth mother wept as she clenched my husband's hand and whispered her thanks to him for flying us across the country to meet her.

I am a physician. As part of a thorough medical history, I take a history of all a patient's prior pregnancies. I have a number of birth mothers as patients. They speak longingly, lovingly about the children they gave up. These women are not afraid that they will be found by their relinquished children. They are afraid that they won't be.

Finally, as a physician adoptee, I can speak to the absolute right of all adoptees to know their medical histories. When I met my original family, I learned that my maternal aunt has a rare inherited disease (Cowden syndrome, associated with an increased risk of breast, thyroid, uterine, colon and kidney cancer-and melanoma) and I should have had that crucial information before I gave birth to my own children. To my great good fortune, I do not carry that gene, I did not pass it on to my children. But I had the right and need to know that I was at risk. And when my own son was diagnosed with leukemia just before his second birthday, my newfound siblings all offered to donate bone marrow to him. Thankfully, he was cured without requiring that, but had he come to need bone marrow transplant, had I not found my original family, had we not had dozens of potential donors, we could have lost him.

Please, pass this bill. Give all Connecticut adoptees the chance to learn what I did. Grant them their identities, their medical histories, their origins, their futures.

Respectfully,

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