

House Bill 6105, An Act Concerning Access to Original Birth Records By Adult Adopted Persons

1. What HB 6105 does
 - a. **Provides access to original, true birth certificate** for adult adoptees older than 37 years of age and their adult children or grandchildren (younger adoptees already have this right)
 - b. **Restores the law**: the right existed until 1975
 - c. **Changes** administrative fulfillment procedure from DPH to Town Clerks (supported by Town Clerks)

2. Why the bill is necessary
 - a. **Family medical health history** for adoptees and their children, such as diabetes; heart disease; breast, colon and prostate cancer
 - b. **Human need to know who you are**: biology, identity, ancestry, ethnicity
 - c. **Equality**: Equal protection; corrects an injustice
 - d. **Completes the work begun in 2014**
 - e. **Ends discrimination** between adoptees and non-adopted; and between older and younger adoptees
 - f. **Birth records belong to each citizen**: why should government possess information about citizens they cannot access?
 - g. **Helps the great majority** of birth parents and adoptees who want to reunite
 - h. **Follows trend** in other states, including New York, Maine, New Hampshire, Colorado, Oregon, & Rhode Island

3. The bill has strong support
 - a. **Adoptees, birth parents, adoptive parents and adoption professionals have testified** at public hearings
 - b. **Over 500 people** submitted personal, moving written testimony over 5 years
 - c. **Numerous organizations support**, including:
 - i. Access Connecticut
 - ii. Connecticut Council on Adoption
 - iii. Connecticut State Medical Society
 - iv. Connecticut Alliance of Foster and Adoptive Families
 - v. National Association of Social Workers/Connecticut Chapter
 - vi. Legislators, churches and adoption agencies
 - vii. Nearly all adoption-related organizations in the state

4. Process
 - a. **Public hearing** in Planning and Development Committee
 - b. **Strong testimony in support**
 - c. The committee **approved** the bill via consent calendar
 - d. **Well known issue** for years to public, legislators and media

3. Birth parent privacy
 - a. Until 1975 the **law didn't provide anonymity to birth mother**. Any promise of privacy, if in fact it was made, would have **contravened** the law. At the time, adult adoptees and adoptive parents of minor adoptees had access to their child's original birth certificate.

- b. **Not a single document promising confidentiality** was found in a nationwide search by a law professor. Instead, **forty percent (40%)** of documents found **admonished the birth mother to respect the privacy of the adoptee and the adoptive family** and not to try to locate their sons/daughters.
- c. **No perpetual anonymity**: Since 1987, **adult adoptees have had the right** to learn the birth parent's identity **after the birth parent dies**.
- d. **Most birth parents agree to contact** according to surveys and data
 - **Optional Contact Preference Form (CPF)** exists for private communication
 - **Not one "negative" CPF ("please don't contact me") has been filed** under PA 14-133, based on the most recent data compiled by DCF (Feb 2021).
- d. **Ironic effect of antiquated policy**: adoptees are resorting to consumer DNA testing and social media, "outing" birth parents to relatives, friends and strangers. **The law is hurting the very people it purports to protect**.
- e. **Technology** changes the world in unanticipated ways. **The law needs to keep pace with changes**.

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