



Senator Shannon Jones  
Chair Senate Medicaid, Health and Human Services Committee  
Senate Building  
1 Capital Square,  
1st Floor  
Columbus, OH 43215

April 17, 2013

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Dear Honorable Senator Jones,

As the Legislative Chair of the 34-year-old American Adoption Congress (AAC), a national organization that represents adopted persons, birth parents and adoptive parents, I'd like to ask you and your fellow Senate Medicaid, Health and Human Services Committee members to support passage of SB 23. SB 23 will allow Ohio-born adult adoptees to receive a copy of their original birth certificates (OBC), upon request, removing the current requirement that they first obtain an order from a court allowing them to do so.

Since new laws have been passed in Alabama, Delaware, Illinois, Oregon, New Hampshire, Maine, Rhode Island and Tennessee allowing adult adoptees access to their original birth certificates, over 20,000 adoptees have received their original birth certificates with no harm shown to anyone, including birth parents. These states join Kansas and Alaska where original birth certificates were always available.

The data reveals that if access has had any effect on adoptions and abortions, it has been to increase adoptions and decrease abortions. Please take the time to look at this data that is collected from the Health Departments of those states. Original birth certificate data on Rhode Island is scheduled to be released starting on July 1st, 2013.

[http://www.americanadoptioncongress.org/reform\\_adoption\\_data.php](http://www.americanadoptioncongress.org/reform_adoption_data.php)

When New Hampshire (2004), Maine (2007) and Rhode Island (2011) passed legislation allowing all its adult adoptees to obtain an uncertified copy of their original birth certificates, an overwhelming majority of each state's legislators voted in favor of restoring the "human right" to its native born adult adoptees to obtain their OBC.

In New Hampshire, Maine or Rhode Island there have been no reports of any lawsuits, negative consequences or problematic behavior by adopted persons or damage to birth mother's lives as a result of the legislation that passed in these states.

Since the new law took effect in New Hampshire in 2005, almost 1,500 birth certificates have been requested with no harm reported. In Oregon since 2000, over 10,000 adult adoptees have received their birth certificates, again with no ill effects.

SB 23 will restore the privilege of Ohio-born adult adoptees to access their identifying information without restriction, thus granting them rights equal to those enjoyed by all other citizens of Ohio.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Schibbelhute  
Legislative Chairman  
American Adoption Congress  
603-930-2091

cc: Members of the Senate Medicaid, Health and Human Services Committee