

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Adoption Reform Organizations Statement on Illinois HB 4623 Records Access

We, the undersigned members of the adoption community, urge legislators to oppose Illinois House Bill 4623. As written, this bill offers some adopted adults the chance to access their original birth certificates, while banning others from accessing theirs.

Illinois adoptees should be treated the same as non-adopted Illinoisans who face no birth certificate access restrictions. We urge legislators to reject the current compromise language of this flawed bill, and to create a new bill that will restore the civil right, rescinded in 1945, of all Illinois adopted adults to access their original birth certificates without bureaucratic restraint or third party interference.

This bill is merely a convoluted extension of the existing mandatory intermediary system. It turns equal access to adoptees' public records into a question of search and reunion, instead of addressing the civil right of all persons to access their original birth certificates.

Our organizations are united in our concern that the amended bill was not the bill that was posted for weeks on the Illinois legislative web site. This amended bill was not available online until March 13th, 2008, the day the bill passed through committee, making it impossible to present testimony.

“For The Records: Restoring A Right To Adult Adoptees,” a comprehensive study published by the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, examines the issue:

http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/research/2007_11_for_records.php

Access to one's own birth certificate is not a favor to some, but a right for all.

Sincerely,

Anita Walker Field
Illinois Open

Triona Guidry
Midwest Coordinator, Green Ribbon Campaign For Open Records

please see page two for additional signatures

The Honorable Janet Allen
New Hampshire House of Representatives

Marley Greiner
Bastard Nation: The Adoptee Rights Organization

Ann Wilmer
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Bonnie Pazdan Pierce Spinazze
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Illinois Coalition for Truth in Adoption

Mary L. Fuller
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Ron Morgan and Kali Coultas
Day For Adoptee Rights

Sandy White Hawk
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Betty Jean Lifton, Ph.D.
Adoption Counselor
Author, "Journey of the Adopted Self: A Quest for
Wholeness"

Carol Schaefer
Author, "The Other Mother: A Woman's Love for the
Child She Gave Up for Adoption"

Sally Howard
Author, "Finding Me In A Paper Bag"

Sandra K. Musser
Author, "I Would Have Searched Forever"

Rick Ouston
Adoptee/Author, "Finding Family"

Donna Montalbano
Host: Speaking of Adoption

Lindsay Woodside
Missouri Adult Adoptee Rights Coalition
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Pat Marler
Oklahomans for Adoption Reform and Honesty

Betsie Norris
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Sheila Ganz
Bay Area Birthmothers
Filmmaker, "Unlocking the Heart of Adoption"

Erik L. Smith

Mary Anne Cohen

Peter Christian Mose
Illinois Born and Adopted
Arts Educator

Gerald Bailey
Illinois Adoptee
Retired Educator

Msgr. John W. Sweeley, Th.D.
Adoptee and Adoptive Father
Adoptee Rights Activist
Author, "Rights, Liberties, and Social Justice"