

Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee.

My name is Barbara Bennett, the true mother of my stepdaughter, Rachael Clairmont.

Thank you for taking the time to review the adult adoption bill and my testimony.

Hopefully you have read my adult daughter Rachael Clairmont's testimony on her reasons for working so hard on getting this bill passed. You have hopefully read further details from her dad, David Bennett, why the adoption process should not be under the control of Rachael's biological mother. What you are going to read from me is what I believe to be the logical side of why this law needs to be changed.

Meaning of an adult

Adulthood means being responsible for where you are going, what you are going to do with the rest of your life and, most importantly, **being responsible enough to make the right decisions or the wrong ones, whichever it be.**

Meaning of Emancipation

Bear with me and you will read where this is going.

Emancipation – It is defined as the fact or process of being set free from legal, social, or political restrictions; it's a liberation, which is defined as providing a release from a situation which limits freedom of thought or behavior

A minor goes to court to be emancipated from a parent. Why? So, the court can decide if it is in the minor's best interest. But if a minor reaches the age of majority (18), gets married as a minor or enters the Military before 18, they do not need to go to court. Why? Because in these circumstances they are considered an adult.

So why does Maryland have an adult adoption law that contradicts the true meaning of being an adult?

Supporting this bill does not affect anyone but the adult who wants to be adopted. It allows them to control their own assets, control the well-being of their family and control the well-being of themselves. Supporting this bill doesn't help someone's political career and it doesn't cause the voters to pay additional taxes. And let's be honest, how often does an adult child want to be adopted? If biological parents were the parents they are expected to be, then this would not happen. So why not pass this bill?

I read that one of the defined responsibilities of an adult is Self-Care and Emotional Maturity. Emotional maturity being defined as taking responsibility for your feelings and actions.

Isn't this what my adult daughter, Rachael Clairmont, is trying to do?

Tying together everything I just wrote, Rachael, as an adult, is trying to take responsibility for her feelings and actions and promoting her own self-care (responsibilities of being an adult) by "emancipating" herself from her biological mother, meaning she is freeing herself from legal and social restrictions as well as liberating herself from her biological mother. Why can't she do this as an adult?

Being designated officially as Rachael Clairmont's mother, through the adoption process, allows me, as her mother, the peace of mind that my child is no longer suffering. Isn't that something we all want with our children – a peace of mind?

Thank you,

Barbara Bennett