

Senator William C. Smith, Jr.  
Chairman, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Maryland General Assembly  
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 East  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: SB0743**

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee:

As you sit in this room, you may consider the privileges life has afforded you. Whether that be the ability to have access to good food, an education, or a job. But there is one type of privilege that goes unspoken. It is non-adoptee, or biological identity privilege. **I am a Maryland adoptee. I was born in Baltimore, Maryland.** Or, so it states on my amended birth certificate provided to me six years after my birth through adoption. It may seem small but I have come to know this information is inaccurate. Yet, denied any basic information about my life, I held onto any minute detail and built my whole life story around it. Much of what I was given to serve as the foundation for my life was inaccurate, and I felt as though I was living a lie my entire life. The details are not mine. To experience this is to feel as though the government has no respect for my identity as a person. I do not matter to this country.

As an adult I was able to take a DNA test. Thanks to science, the human right to know my identity has been provided to me. Sites like Ancestry and 23 and Me allow for adoptees to connect with people we know are our genetic relatives. However, without our original birth certificate we are still not made whole. It is dehumanizing to have to spend hundreds of dollars and endless hours trying to connect the dots. Throughout this process, we are treated as criminals for a crime we did not commit, and an agreement we had no legal decision over.

The adoptee experience is not something that can be fully comprehended by those who have not lived it. We are humans, like non-adoptees, who deserve equal rights as protected by this country. It is time Maryland remove antiquated restrictions and allow adoptees their original birth certificate. While society tends to infantilize the adoptee, we do not remain children our entire lives. At 18, we are deserving of all information that is rightfully ours. I ask that you bring our country into modern times and vote 'yes' on SB0743.

Thank you,  
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