

RE: TESTIMONY

HB: 1039 JUDICIARY COMMITTEE HOUSE OF DELEGATES FEBRUARY 20, 2020

I am Linda Clausen, a birthmother who relinquished two children in the 60's, and reunited with them both

Sadly, my youngest son, who found me in 1990, passed in 2016, after injuries from a fall. We had 26 years of reunion. I know that his finding me was healing for both of us. He wanted a copy of his his Original Birth Certificate (OBC) . He was quite surprised that I did not have a copy because in 1963 birthmothers were not allowed. I know it meant so much to him when it arrived.

I have worked as a Foster Care Social Worker, and completed many adoptions. I have facilitated a support group for adult adoptees and birthparents since 1993. I have heard from so many adoptees in this group, and also from attending many post-adoption national conferences, about their desire and need to have a copy of their own Original Birth Certificate. Adoptees talk about their feelings about being the only US citizens not allowed to have that piece of paper in their hand. Why must adoptees be separated from other U.S. citizens, as everyone else has this piece of paper? Every person who is adopted should be able, if they wish, to know and/or meet their original parents. There are many ways to do that now. With DNA testing accessible, and many trained genealogists available, there are many more reunions lately. **But getting the OBC is about so much more than finding birthparents.**

A Birth Certificate is issued for every person born. But for adopted individual what they DO get is a piece of paper equal to "Fake News." On the Birth Certificate given to an adoptee it is currently states that THEIR ADOPTIVE PARENTS HAVE GIVEN BIRTH TO THE CHILD. THIS IS AN UNTRUTH. Why did those before us think that this was the way to set up adoptions. WHY an out-and-out lie should on the Birth Certificate issued for a new baby; To begin his life with a lie on the most important piece of paper connecting him to his life is not right. This amended birth certificate is what he must look at for the rest of his life. Before my son found me I had no idea what the adopted person received. Once I learned, and processed this information, it made no sense to me. I hope YOU will think about this!!! I believe that there should be an Original Birth Certificate with the name of the original parents, and the child; AND, there should be an Adoption Certificate giving the names of the adoptive parents and the child's new name. There will be accurate information on each document, and wonder and fantasy eliminated. Adoptees can get their passports and REAL ID's, with minimal problems.

Before the original (first) mother makes a final decision to place the child, she should be informed that this is the system. This should eliminate secrets and lies throughout the lifetime of those involved. If the adoption is a closed one, the child will have information to connect with his parent(s) when he/she is older.. If the child, NOW AN ADULT finds a parent, there are two adults making a decision on whether they wish to know each other, or not. Also stated in an an article in the NYTimes recently stated that , 95% of the adoptions done in recent years are Open Adoptions. In the future more than likely there will be even more. HB 1039 is about the segregation of adoptees, from all others.

Please think about how you would feel if you were adopted and a birth certificate given to you which is basically a fabricated piece of paper. AND, what does not make sense is that there are 2 groups of adoptees born in Maryland, each living under separate rules. All Maryland-born adoptees should have the same rights.

PLEASE CLOSE tHIS GAP. Give equal rights to each adoptee.Please pass HB1039 It truly means a lot to adopted individuals of Maryland. At age 18 they are no longer the child.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and for your consideration.

Linda Clausen, MSW. LGSW  
Region 2 Director, DCMETRO CUB  
[dcmetroclub@aol.com](mailto:dcmetroclub@aol.com)

Director, Region 2 & Board of Directors, Concerned United Birthparents [www.cubirthparents.org](http://www.cubirthparents.org)  
ACCESSMARYLAND, Founded 2012: [accessobcmaryland@gmail.com](mailto:accessobcmaryland@gmail.com)