



January 22, 2021

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

RE: SB0331

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee:

The Texas Adoptee Rights Coalition represents a successful state-wide coalition that has brought organizations together to work on a single issue. TXARC and its member organizations commit in writing “to restore the right of all Texas adult adoptees to obtain their original birth certificates, without discriminatory conditions or restrictions.” That is bottom-line equality, and it means equality for all adoptees. Thus, discriminatory provisions that alter an original birth certificate or withhold it from adults has no place in our work.

On behalf of the Texas Adoptee Rights Coalition and its members and thousands of individual supporters in Texas and across the country, we request that you recommend passage of SB0331, Senator Susan Lee’s bill that restores equality for all Maryland-born adoptees.

I was born and adopted in the early 1970’s and endured a ten year battle with the courts and the adoption agency for information *about my own birth* and adoption. It was the most dehumanizing experience of my life, yet it is common for nearly all adopted people, including those born in Maryland. I’m a mother of four, a wife, and co-owner of a successful business. I’ve put three children through college, I vote, and I pay taxes. Yet I’m prohibited from obtaining a copy of my own true record of birth, just as most Maryland adoptees are. I cannot think of anything more infantilizing than the state treating me and thousands of other adopted people like perpetual children who cannot handle their own information. We are adults, and we demand that we be treated as adults and equal to all others as adults.

Texas Adoptee Rights Coalition · Texas-Based, Texas-Driven, Texas-Led

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I implore you to vote SB0331 favorably out of Committee and once and for all, right a historic wrong and restore dignity to all Maryland adoptees. Adopted people deserve the same rights to know their origins to possess their own vital records, just like all other non-adopted residents of Maryland.

Best regards,

TEXAS ADOPTEE RIGHTS COALITION

Shawna Hodgson
Spokesperson