



Maryland Senator Susan C. Lee  
223 James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

January 22, 2021

Senator Lee and fellow Honorable Members of the Maryland Legislature,

This statement is furnished to express support by the [American Adoption Congress](#) for SB331, a vital human and civil rights proposal which will:

- **Restore unrestricted access** to original birth certificates (OBC) for adult adoptees, just like all citizens and adults who “age-out” of foster care
- **Lower the age** at which an adult adoptee may gain access to their own personally identifying information (to 18+)
- **Transfer any previous, discriminatory disclosure vetoes** to acceptable non-binding contact preferences
- **Allow for non-binding contact preferences** to be filed

At the age of 18, all citizens of Maryland have the legal right to obtain their original birth certificate, except for adopted adults. The American Adoption Congress feels that now, after years of consideration, Maryland is poised to join the nine other states with unrestricted access policy. **This belief is consistent with our [formal legislative policy](#) for clean adoption reform.**

Further, we expect that the proper reform in Maryland will help, as in [New York in 2020](#), lead other diverse states to enact proper reform. The time is now. The right to know one’s identity is a human right that should not be incrementally bestowed or denied to any American.

Birth parents were not promised lifelong anonymity from the daughters and sons they surrendered for adoption. There is no law in Maryland that legally guarantees anonymity to birth parents or birth families. These, and the various other arguments offered by opponents to reform, have been thoroughly refuted with constructive results in other states.

The American Adoption Congress began in 1978. The group officially formed the American Adoption Congress in 1980 with the goal of championing adoptee rights, with emphasis on gaining universal access to original birth certificates for adoptees. The AAC incorporated in 1981 and has been a 501(c)(3), registered in the state of Missouri, since 1982.

We hope this statement may assist. We thank you for the introduction of SB331 and ongoing efforts to advocate for adult adoptee human and civil rights.

Respectfully,

*Tim*

Tim Monti-Wohlpart  
American Adoption Congress  
National Legislative Chair