

Letter to North Jersey.com – The RECORD online edition

Measure would aid those seeking biological parents

Sunday, March 23, 2008

Last updated: Sunday March 23, 2008, EDT 8:47 AM

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1. Mary says: As the CEO of a cancer support organization I know how important it is for someone to have access to their family medical history. There are many cancer survivors that owe their survival to early detection because they knew to be on the lookout for something. I am also an adult adoptee. I contacted my birth-mother when I was 30 - yes, partly because medical information was important to me as I was contemplating starting my own family, but also because I wanted to put an end to a lifetime of not knowing who I really was. I believe the real opponents to open adoptions are the adoptive parents. Many are very insecure about the possibility of "losing" their child. My adoptive mother will simply not even discuss the matter or acknowledge the existence of my birth mother. I love my parents and know that I have had a wonderful life because of them. THEY are my parents and will never "lose" me. I am who I am because of them. I have encountered many adoptive parents who have made me feel like I'm a bad child because I found my birth family. They say things like "my child loves me; he would never look for his birth mother; he knows I am his mother." Searching for one's birth parents rarely has anything to do with the relationship one has with their adoptive parents. I hope that we can all realize this and give adoptees the right to the information - THEIR information -- that everyone else has and takes for granted.
2. Cellobration says: From 1976-84, I was a resident of Weehawken, NJ when I searched and found my birth parents in 1981. My search and reunion was with the knowledge and support of my adopted family. Learning the truth of my origins and medical background was beneficial to me, my birth parents, adopted family, and current family. No one's lives were harmed as a result of learning the truth. Nine out of ten reunions have positive outcomes. Let records finally be opened to adult adoptees and truth no longer be suppressed. Not every birth mother was promised anonymity, nor wanted it. My birth parents never wanted anonymity, stayed together their whole lives, and searched for 30 years to find me. Learning the truth of my origins did not replace the role my adopted parents held in my life and heart. The reunion was very positive and a new friendship developed. From 1996-99, I became a care giver to my birth mother after her stroke. Hiding the truth and hiding from it is not the answer. Barbara Hedlund www.cellobmusicplus.com
3. PSharp says: Thank you for this cogent, eloquent statement in favor of the adoptees' Bill of Right. Simply put, adoptees are a class of citizens who have too long been denied a basic civil right that has always been available to every other citizen of the United States --

that is, to go to the vital records office of the state in which they were born, pay the fee and receive a copy of their original birth record. The "privacy" sham -- that birth mothers were supposedly promised anonymity when relinquishing their babies -- just does not hold up when weighed with the fact that concealment does not occur *unless* the child is adopted, i.e., the birth certificate of a child who remains in foster care or is returned by adopted family is never sealed. Also noteworthy is something we are coming to recognize, sadly, in the persistent debate about opening records for adoptees, that is, that the "privacy" sham is consistently being raised by men. Why is it that? Why do these male legislators seek to speak for us women and claim that we wanted anonymity, when overwhelmingly nine out of ten of us say the exact opposite? Methinks the men doth protest -- just why is it *they* are afraid of opening records?