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March 19, 2018

Senator Richard W. Sears, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
Vermont State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301
rsears@leg.state.vt.us

Re: H.562

Dear Senator Sears:

We are writing to lend our strong support to the new Vermont Parentage Act, H.562.

AAAA is a credentialed, nonprofit organization of attorneys, judges and law professors throughout the United States, Canada and abroad all of whom are distinguished in the legal fields of adoption and assisted reproductive technology. Specifically, as pertains to the matters addressed in the Bill, we support and advocate for the rights of families and work to insure appropriate consideration of all parties' interests, including children, in assisted reproductive technology matters. Our Fellows are committed to the ethical practice of adoption and assisted reproductive technology law.

This legislation is a giant step forward for Vermont, responding to the changing landscape of family formation in the State today, and providing solutions for many of the problems that have repeatedly faced our family courts, the history of which have been reported in Vermont Supreme Court opinions over the last twenty years, including the notorious Miller-Jenkins case, and most recently the case of Sinnot v. Peck. The legislation will also bring Vermont into line with recently passed legislation in Maine and New Hampshire, while Massachusetts is hard at work on a similar bill.

For the first time, Vermonters who grow their families through assisted reproductive technologies will have a procedure to establish legal parentage of children born through sperm and egg donation and gestational surrogacy. The all-important parentage orders made available under Chapters 7 and 8 of this bill will provide much needed legal stability from the moment of birth for children born through assisted fertility procedures.

This bill utilizes the best parts of the Maine Parentage Act, and the newly minted 2017 Uniform Parentage Act as its foundation. It was customized for Vermont's needs by leading practitioners in the Vermont legal and medical communities who have had decades of experience in the field.

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The Academy applauds Vermont's efforts at modernizing its parentage laws, which were last updated more than thirty years ago. This is an excellent, well-crafted piece of legislation, and we urge your committee to approve its passage.

Sincerely,



Margaret E. Swain, R.N., J.D.
Director of ART
Academy of Adoption & Assisted
Reproduction Attorneys



Kurt Hughes, Chair
ART Legislative Committee
Academy of Adoption & Assisted
Reproduction Attorneys

