

Honorable Roberta B. Beavers, MBA, MA  
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Re: The Vermont Public Hearing re **H.629**

Good morning, Rep Maxine Grad and distinguished members of the House Judiciary Committee. I am Roberta Beavers of South Berwick, ME. I co-authored the Maine Adoptee Human Rights Law that passed in 2007 (effective date January 1, 2009, due to rulemaking process), three years prior to being elected to the Maine House of Representatives, from which I retired in December 2016.

My understanding is that there is a proposed amendment which replaces the original H.629 and that the proposed amendment is modeled after the bills passed in New Hampshire (2004) and Maine (2007). **It is this proposed replacement bill I am supporting here today.**

I am a birthmother whose son was conceived in rape in 1965 and I still wanted to know my son. It took me nearly 30 years to accept the responsibility I had to my son despite having surrendered my parental rights. Thanks to joining an adoption triad support group and reading every adoption related book I could get my hands on, especially one by adoptive mother Nancy Verrier - *Primal Wound*, I finally understood the importance of the original birth certificate to adults who were adopted as infants or children. Most birthmothers do not understand this importance when they relinquish their child - which is usually done under great duress. Personally, I find it difficult to understand how any woman could want to be protected from her own child. Adoptees are the only citizens, except for those in the witness protection program, in the US whose original birth certificates are sealed from them except in Kansas and Alaska, who never sealed them, and now many other states that have passed access laws since 1999. The statistics in the states that have allowed this access for adult adoptees indicate that adoptions have remained the same or increased and abortions have decreased since these states allowed adult adoptees access to their original birth certificate and less than 1% of the birthmothers signed a contact preference expressing unwillingness to have contact.

This is a **human rights/social justice issue** for adoptees because they had no say in the matter as an infant or child. This bill does **NOT** open the information to the public, only to the adult adoptees that request it. Some adoptees just want the “deed to their personhood,” but do not wish to search. Others want their genetics and/or genealogy. For many it is a life and death issue related to medical circumstances. The bill provides a contact preference for those birthparents who do not wish to be contacted but requires them to provide updated medical history. Mutual consent registries do not work if any of the parties are deceased or incapacitated. The strength of my son’s relationship with his loving and caring adoptive family has increased since our reunion in 1995. In the New Jersey triad support group in which I was a member for over 5 years, there was not one person who was sorry they searched even if they found rejection, death, mental illness, and other devastating results. It was their **truth**.

**The child first! Please support the amended H.269 with the proposed replacement.**

Sincerely and respectfully,

*Roberta B Beavers, aka Bobbi*