

Dear Senators:

My name is Mike Fortuna, and I live in Shelburne. My sister Kimberly and I grew up in Charlotte. She, CVU class of 1987, and I, CVU class of 1983 and UVM class of 1987. I owned and operated a small business in South Burlington for many years. Kimberly lives and works in Florida.

Kimberly was born in Rutland in October of 1969. Our parents adopted her as an infant soon after. Since she was adopted before the seemingly arbitrary date of July 1, 1986, and her biological mother has not filed a consent to disclose, her original birth

certificate and adoption records are sealed under current law until her 99th birthday.

She and I were having a discussion around Thanksgiving of 2020. We are both in our 50s and she mentioned how lucky I was to know my genetics and family health history. With her identity sealed, Kimberly is denied what most of us take for granted. A week or so later, I read an article in the Burlington Free Press which mentioned that New York State had addressed that very problem early that year. A quick internet search revealed that New Hampshire had changed

their adoption law as well.

On November 30, 2020 I wrote my Representative, Kate Webb to see if anything could be done. The result is H. 629 which I am asking you and your committee to support and advance.

The societal norms that led to our closed record laws have evolved. I believe that continuing our official policy of suppressing the truth and enabling one individual to deny another their basic human right to know their genetic identity, and biological and health history is bad governance.

This is an urgent matter.

My sister and other aging adoptees may be facing early death or needless pain and suffering due to preventable disease. I really believe the effective date of July 1, 2024 needs to be reconsidered. The sooner we stop perpetuating this serious public health problem, the better.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Best regards,

Mike Fortuna

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