



March 31, 2022

The Honorable Richard Sears
Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee
Vermont State State
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

RE: H629 Proposed Language

Dear Chairman Sears:

We listened intently to the final testimony on H629, though we were surprised by opposition from the Vermont Network. We feel those concerns are speculative and do not generally exist decades after a relinquishment. Moreover, solutions that withhold or redact information about an adopted person's own birth do not protect anyone—rather, it merely incentivizes the use of other effective tools to find information, such as DNA, and those tools make the circumstances of the birth much more public.

That aside, the Network's concern has a simple solution, and a solution that empowers both the adoptee and the birthparent with what is often missing in these situations: information that enables each person to make informed and wise decisions.

This would involve adding the following sentence to Section 5, which deals in part with the contact preference form:

A contact preference form shall include space where the parent may include information that the parent feels is important for the adoptee to know.

We have attached sample language in H629 that would accomplish this. In addition to providing space to share information about a parent's safety concern (if that concern is still present many years later) it would also allow the parent to share medical or genetic



information that the parent feels is necessary for the adoptee to know, whether or not the parent prefers or does not prefer contact.

We appreciate your significant attention to this issue, which is obviously very important to us all.

**VERMONT ADOPTEE RIGHTS WORKING GROUP &
NEW ENGLAND ADOPTEE RIGHTS COALITION**

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(c) (1) A person who is listed as a parent on the adoptee's original birth certificate may at any time request from the State Registrar a contact preference form that, if filed by the parent, shall accompany an original birth certificate issued pursuant to this title. The contact preference form shall be developed by the State Registrar and shall indicate whether the parent would:

(A) prefer to be contacted by the adoptee.

(B) prefer to be contacted by the adoptee only through an intermediary.

(C) prefer not to be contacted by the adoptee at this time.

(2) A contact preference form shall include space where the parent may include information that the parent feels is important for the adoptee to know. A contact preference form may be withdrawn or revised at any time.

(d) The contact preference form is a confidential communication and it shall be sealed upon receipt from a parent and exempt from public inspection and copying under the Public Records Act pursuant to section 6-102 of this title.