

Senator William C. Smith, Jr.
Chairman, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 East Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB1039/SB0743

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Committee:

My name is Janice (Kelch) Vincent and I am an adoptee. I was adopted through Baltimore County Social Services when I was almost 6 months old.

I don't ever remember a time when I did not know that I was adopted. I was told that my birth mother was unable to give me the care she wanted and that she loved me so much, she wanted me to grow up in a home that could provide for all my needs.

When I was 4 years old, my mom received a phone call and then told me we were going to get a baby brother the next day. For a few years, I thought you just drove to Towson to get a baby.

My adoption papers only show a birth history of a Protestant background. Sadly, no health or other information. As my own children got older, they were curious about medical history. Our doctors told us that medical science was so advanced we did not have to be concerned.

In 2002 my husband and I moved to our current address and through the years, I learned that my next door neighbor happened to be adopted. Around 2014, she was told that she could now legally access her original birth certificate. She did and her family received a lot of background and health information.

Curious, I thought I would look into getting my OBC. Sadly, I learned that my birth year remained in a "black-out" timeframe.... My neighbor, just 2 years older, was indeed included in the new timeframe, as were children born in the year 2000 and after. BUT NOT ME... Because of 2 years, I cannot get my own personal history, but my neighbor could AND next year, as adoptees turn 21, they can also.... BUT NOT ME.....

I believe the current Maryland law to be inequitable and unfair. I now have 8 grandchildren asking about their family and medical history.

On their behalf, I encourage you to support SB0743.

Thank you.

Janice Lynn Kelch Vincent
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