

Delegate Luke Clippinger
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
Maryland General Assembly
House Office Building, Room 101
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

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 Clippinger, Chairman Smith, and Members of the Committees:

I am an adult adoptee and am a Maryland citizen. I support HB1039 and SB0743. I believe that at age 18 adoptees should be able to receive, upon request, a copy of our original birth certificates. This is just a matter of basic civil rights. If Maryland passes such legislation, it will not only be good for adult adoptees in Maryland, but will hopefully influence other states such as Virginia, where I was born and adopted.

When I contacted a lawyer in Virginia about getting my own original birth certificate, the lawyer discouraged me because such petitions are rarely granted. You have to show "good cause". I think to the contrary that it is the government that should have to show "good cause" for denying me the same type of birth certificate that other citizens take for granted. I am an adult tax-paying citizen, but in this one respect the government treats me like a perpetual child. It is very paternalistic and just wrong.

By the way, I have done DNA tests with Ancestry.com and 23&me. Now in Ancestry, I have two family trees, my adoptive tree and my biological tree. I've gotten into genealogy. I found an ancestor who was a Minuteman at the Lexington Alarm. I joined the Sons of the American Revolution. My point is that the laws haven't caught up with modern reality. I found my ancestry, and I enjoy it. Explain to me why it is in my best interest or the best interest of society that adults like me not have access to our original birth certificates? It makes no sense to me.

I respectfully ask that members of the Committees vote Yes on the bills and recommend passage of HB1039 and SB0743.

Sincerely,

Ed Knight
knighted2@gmail.com

