



**Letter in support of TX HB2006: 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session**

***To the Texas Legislature, from Elizabeth Jurenovich of Abrazo Adoption Associates***

To the esteemed members of the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislature:

I appeal to you to take a stand for truth by supporting TX HB2006, a bill that would finally protect the civil rights of adults adopted in Texas who wish to access their own original birth certificates, just as every other Texan can do.

I am a licensed marriage and family therapist, a Texas child welfare agency administrator, a mother, and a voter. I have worked in adoption in Texas since 1987, and my nonprofit adoption agency has promoted fully transparent adoptions since 1994, because I've witnessed the lasting damage that secrecy and shame in adoption can cause-- and because I know that the truth matters.

Indeed, vital records are labeled as "vital" because there is nothing more important than knowing and having access to one's own truth. Health is rooted in self-awareness, so clearly, there's enormous power in identity. And nobody should have control over something as intimate as a Texan's original birth record other than the very person whose birth is documented therein.

This is the Information Age, so it serves no purpose to force adult adoptees to undergo costly DNA testing just to obtain the very information that should truly belong to them to begin with. Ethical adoption agencies like mine have never "promised anonymity" to birthparents nor adoptive parents because we know that it is every parent's responsibility to raise adoptees to know the truth of their origins. (Indeed: the historical intent of closed adoption records was to prevent society from judging adoptees for being born out of wedlock, a social norm that no longer applies, regardless of whether an adoption takes place or not.)

The vast majority of Texas' citizens wholeheartedly understand and support the rights of Texas adoptees to have unrestricted access to their unamended birth records, and the minority who do not typically lack the skills needed to comprehend the best interests of grown adoptees. Yet to know the truth of one's own origins, one's ethnicity and one's genetic history, is the very foundation of healthy self-identity, thus it is *imperative* that Texas lawmakers support the right of every once-adopted Texan to possess their original birth certificate, should they wish to obtain it for any reason.

I implore you to right the decades-old wrong Texas has imposed on adult adoptees denied their own vital truth... please pass TX HB2006, without any further delay.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Jurenovich, MS, LCPAA, LPC, LMFT

Founder/Executive Director

**"A Better Choice For A Brighter Future"**