



Concerned United Birthparents, Inc.
Since 1976

In support of HB 2006 and SB 2237- Relating to birth records of adopted persons

March 21, 2023

Dear Honorable Members of the Texas Legislature:

On behalf of Concerned United Birthparents (CUB), we thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement in **strong support** of HB 2006 and SB 2237- *Relating to birth records of adopted persons*. We write to ask you to support these bills in their current state.

CUB supports adult adopted persons' rights to access their original birth certificate, without restrictions or qualifications. Knowing one's identity is a civil right which is being consistently abused by the practice of sealed records adoptions. All human beings have the right to know their original identity which includes their genetic roots, their medical history and biological history. While the vast majority of birthparents actually want to be reunited with their adult sons/daughters they lost to adoption, in the end, this is not relevant to us. **We believe an adopted person's right to their original birth certificate is absolute.**

CUB was founded in 1976. We are an organization developed to support parents who have lost children to adoption. We are known for our tireless work in adoption reform for more than forty years. For too many of these years, lawmakers have spoken for us without asking our opinion, and made assumptions about us without examining the evidence. They assume we don't want a voice; we don't want a choice; and we are happy in the shadows. We are not. This misguided attempt to "protect our privacy" actually perpetuates the shame that was originally inflicted on us by a society that rejected us as women and mothers. We are silent no longer.

The myth that confidentiality was promised to a birthparent, is often used to oppose open records. To us, that premise is shocking. Since "we" are the population being spoken for, we would like to set the record straight once and for all: **We were never promised confidentiality, nor did we ask for it.** Further, we never wanted confidentiality from our own adult sons/daughters that we lost to adoption! Such anonymity was forced onto us. This issue of confidentiality was actually researched by

Elizabeth J. Samuels, professor of law at the University of Maryland. Her findings were overwhelmingly conclusive: there has never been a single document presented that supports this myth of confidentiality ([Surrender and Subordination: Birth Mothers and Adoption Law Reform](#), 20 Mich. J. Gender & L. 33 (2013)). The experience of other states that have restored rights to adult adopted persons indicate that the overwhelming majority of birthparents are open to contact by their surrendered sons and daughters.

For those still concerned about “protecting our privacy,” the \$2 billion dollar consumer-DNA testing industry¹ makes public exposure of birthparents much more likely than providing an adult adopted person with the right to request and receive his/her original birth certificate. **Representatives, we assure you that the day is here when it is actually more private to restore an adopted person’s right to their original birth certificate than to not.** An adopted person with his/her original birth certificate (and therefore our names as birthparents) can make sensitive, personal and private contact, which we prefer. An adopted person who takes a DNA test must reveal their birthparent’s identity to every biological relative who also took a DNA test. These relatives learn about a birthparent’s status before the birthparent knows he or she is being sought. You should know adult adopted persons are reporting they actually don’t even want to do DNA but they feel like they have to in order to circumvent outdated laws in place that restrict their rights to their original birth certificates. So, if the only reason you have to keep the current law in place is because you think you’re protecting parents of adoption loss, the hard reality is you’re not. In fact, you’re leaving us exposed and subjected to being publicly outed through consumer-DNA².

Please pass HB 2006 and SB 2237 as they are because (1) all adult adopted persons have a fundamental right to the truth and their original birth certificates, and (2) we birthparents were never promised confidentiality nor do we want it, and we especially don’t want it from our adult sons/daughters we lost to adoption. And (3), please pass HB 2006 and SB 2237 with great comfort and ease because the bill gives us, birthparents, more protection under the law than we currently have now subjected to being discovered through consumer-DNA. Simply put, HB 2006 and SB 2237 is the best, most private and most dignified option for both adult adopted persons and birthparents. Support HB 2006 and SB 2237 because it’s the right thing to do.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Deborah Myers
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¹ [Consumer Genomics Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report](#), Grandview Market Research, Jul 2019

² [More than 26 million people shared their DNA with ancestry firms, allowing researchers to trace relationships between virtually all Americans: MIT](#), Health Tech Matters, CNBC, Feb. 2019