



### ***Can You Imagine Not Knowing Your Own Identity?***

Due to laws passed over 70 years ago, thousands of people who were born and adopted in New York State are denied access to their own legal documentation including their original birth certificates (OBC). Since the late 1970's, many different bills have been introduced in New York trying to rectify this situation, but nothing has ever passed.

Once again this legislative session, New York has introduced new legislation that would finally give adult adoptees equal treatment under law. However, there are multiple versions of "Adoptee Rights" bills and *only* one of them would actually restore the adopted citizens access to their legal documentation; the other versions create additional "rules" that only apply to those adopted. When we treat people differently based on the circumstances of their birth, it is the classic definition of discrimination.

#### **GOOD: S5169A / A6821A**

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Upon the age of 18, an adoptee can request their original birth certificate from the state just like any other non-adopted person.

They fill out a form, they send it in with a fee just like anyone else.

No other adult gets to weigh in and consent or deny permission to this adoptee; just like everyone else.

The adoptee receives their OBC.

JUST. LIKE. EVERYONE. ELSE!

What they choose to do with their legal documentation after receiving it is their own business.

If the adoptee chooses to make contact with their biological families, the state has no obligation to intervene.

#### **NOT GOOD: S4845 / A5036**

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Upon the age of 18, an adoptee can petition the court.

**IF** the Department of Health can contact the birth parent for permission or if the birth parent has already filed with the registry, and **IF** they consent, **THEN** the adoptee can have their OBC.

**IF** the birth parent does not give permission, then the adoptee can get an edited version of their OBC.

**IF** the the birth parent cannot be found **AND** if the judge thinks that the OBC won't be "CLEARLY DETRIMENTAL TO THE WELFARE OF THE BIRTH OR ADOPTIVE PARENTS" then the adoptee *might* be granted their OBC.

**IF** anyone presents "EVIDENCE CONCERNING THE WISHES OF THE BIRTH PARENT REGARDING CONFIDENTIALITY AS EXPRESSED AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OR SURRENDER" then the adoptee most like will not receive an un-redacted version of their OBC.

***Please call, write or email your local legislators and ask them to support***

***ONLY S5169A / A6821!***