



## **NYARC STATEMENT ON THE 2018 NEW YORK LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

### **January 29, 2018**

New York adoptees and their allies have reviewed three different versions of “adoptee rights” bills pending in the New York legislature. The New York Adoptee Rights Coalition (NYARC) endorses and trusts one bill to end discrimination and to restore to all New York adult adoptees the right to obtain their own original birth certificates upon request, without discriminatory conditions or restrictions.

#### **NYARC strongly supports enactment of S5169A/A6821A (the “Avella Bill”)**

Senator Tony Avella, the primary sponsor of S5169A, is a consistent advocate for adoptee rights and has shown unwavering dedication and commitment in pursuing legislation to assure equality for all adopted persons in New York state. The Avella Bill provides the best and most strategic path forward, and NYARC will work to ensure that S5169A receives full consideration in the New York legislature and is enacted without the addition of any discriminatory provisions.

#### **NYARC opposes A5449 (the “Registry Bill”)**

This bill, sponsored by Assemblymember David Weprin, does not restore any adoptee rights. It releases an original birth certificate only if both the birthparent and the adoptee are registered via the New York Adoption Information Registry.

#### **NYARC does not endorse or support S7550/A9632 (the “Lanza Bill”)**

The current text of the Lanza Bill is nearly identical to at least two previous bills introduced by Senator Andrew Lanza and Assemblymember David Weprin. Nevertheless, past actions of these sponsors, which include repeated addition of restrictive and discriminatory amendments to their legislation, now make the Lanza Bill an unacceptable choice for pursuing adoptee equality. Here’s why:

- A nearly identical bill to the Lanza Bill was first pursued in 2013 and was ultimately amended to add unacceptable and discriminatory provisions in the final days of the 2014 legislative session.

- While the sponsors introduced the same bill again in 2015, the assembly companion bill was later amended immediately prior to a floor vote to include discriminatory provisions. Senator Lanza and Assemblymember Weprin did not notify those most impacted by the amendments and further ignored the objections of advocates and allies who opposed those amendments.
- Rather than start over with a new bill in 2017, Senator Lanza and Assemblymember Weprin introduced a bill that retained the same discriminatory provisions that had been added in the prior session. This bill, later known as A5036B, ultimately passed the Assembly and Senate. Governor Cuomo vetoed the legislation, however, after thousands of constituents, dozens of advocacy groups, and all of the current members of NYARC demanded the veto.

To date, there has been no assurance from the Lanza Bill’s sponsors that they will reject discriminatory amendments to their bills. Given their previous track record and the long historic fight for genuine adoptee equality in New York, the New York Adoptee Rights Coalition cannot support the Lanza Bill. As in the past, we understand it is already earmarked for amendment to include inequitable and unjust provisions.

We ask Senator Lanza and Assemblymember Weprin to reconsider sponsorship of their current legislation. We also ask New York legislators and the hundreds of thousands of New York adoptees and their allies to join NYARC to support the Avella bill, the most promising pending legislation that will work to end more than 80 years of discriminatory treatment of New York adoptees.

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### About the New York Adoptee Rights Coalition

The New York Adoptee Rights Coalition works to restore the right of adult adoptees in New York to obtain their original birth certificates without conditions or restrictions. While we continue to build the coalition, current coalition partners include:



New York Adoptee Equality  
American Adoption Congress  
Adoptee Rights Law Center

Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York  
Bastard Nation: The Adoptee Rights Organization

More information about NYARC can be found on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) and at [nyadopteerights.org](http://nyadopteerights.org). The coalition can also be reached for questions or inquiries at [coalition@nyadopteerights.org](mailto:coalition@nyadopteerights.org).