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****PRESS RELEASE****

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Weprin, Gottfried Call for Passage of Clean Adoptee Rights Bill

ALBANY, NEW YORK – Assemblymembers David I. Weprin, Richard N. Gottfried, Robert C. Carroll, Rebecca A. Seawright, Fred W. Thiele, Jr., Karl Brabenec, and Mark Johns joined advocates from the New York Adoptee Rights Coalition, New York Statewide Adoption Reform's Unsealed Initiative, Bastard Nation, and the Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York in calling for the passage of A 9959B / S 7631B which establishes the right of adoptees to receive a certified copy of their birth certificate upon reaching the age of 18.

"Our state remains behind in granting what is a human and civil right; the right of adopted individuals to their original birth certificate, medical history and identities. Under current law, children born in New York State who are then adopted lose access to any form of their original birth certificate and with that, also lose any connection to their family history, medical background, and sense of self." **said Assemblyman David I. Weprin.** *"This does not make much sense at all and New York's adoptees cannot afford to wait much longer for this basic right. It's time to make it right and pass the clean bill of adoptee rights"*

"Access to your personal information – who you are and where you come from – is a human right," **said Assembly Health Committee Chair Richard N. Gottfried.** *"New Yorkers need their own medical histories in order to make better health care choices. And connecting adoptees and birth parents works; in the overwhelming majority of cases, these reunions are cherished by both parties. I am proud we reported it from the Health Committee today."*

"The passage of A.9959-B, before the end of the legislative session, is an essential step in making sure adoptees full civil and human rights are finally recognized in New York State," **said Assembly member Robert C. Carroll.** *"A 'clean' adoption reform bill that allows adoptees, unrestricted access to their original birth certificate, is an essential step in making sure all New Yorkers are treated equally under the law. Having access to one's vital records is not only a civil and human right but is essential to self actualization and good public health. I commend, Assembly member Weprin and all of the advocates for their tireless support of this issue. Hopefully, this legislation will end New York State's record of keeping personal records from its citizens."*

"Adoptive parents, like all good parents, want what is best for their children. No parent wants the state to legally discriminate against their children. NY needs to make all children, adopted or not, equal under the law," **said Claudia Corrigan D'Arcy, Director of Outreach and Advocacy at the Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition of New York.**

"As advocates of the civil and human rights of all adoptees, bastard Nation hopes New York can fulfill the promise demonstrated by Governor Cuomo's veto last year. New York needs to end the hidden legacy of shame, fear and venality by restoring the ALL adoptees rights," **said Emm Paul, Secretary at Bastard Nation.**

The Nation has always looked to New York as a leader. It is time for New York to show the nation and take a leadership position and restore adult adoptees access to their original birth certificates. If New York can pass this bill this session, it will be a powerful signal to the rest of the county that positive change is coming," **said Tim Monti-Wohlpert, National Legislative Chair and New York State Representative for American Adoption Congress.**

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<<Photo attached: Adoptee Rights Press Conference06052018.jpg>>

<<Caption: Left to Right: Assembly members Mark Johns, Fred W. Thiele, Jr., David I. Weprin, Rebecca A. Seawright, and Karl Brabenec join adoptee rights advocates in the Capitol. >>