



New York State Senator Velmanette Montgomery
188 State Street
915 Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12248

February 11, 2019

Senator Montgomery,

This statement is furnished to express support by the **American Adoption Congress** for the “clean” Bill of Adoptee Rights in New York (**S3419**) allowing:

- **Unrestricted access** to long form original birth certificates (OBC) for adult adoptees, just like all citizens and adults who “age-out” of foster care
- OBC access for direct line descendants, or legal representatives, if the adoptee is deceased
- OBC access for legal representatives

At the age of 18, all New Yorkers have the legal right to obtain their original birth certificate, except for adopted adults. The American Adoption Congress feels that now, after decades of consideration, committee hearings, and a workgroup study, New York is poised to join the nine other states with unrestricted access policy. **This belief is consistent with our formal legislative policy for “clean” adoption reform.**

Further, we expect a New York Law of Adoptee Rights will lead other large and diverse states, like New York, to enact proper reform. The time is now. The right to know one’s identity is a human right that should not be incrementally bestowed or denied to any American.

Birth parents were not promised lifelong anonymity from the daughters and sons they surrendered for adoption. There is no law in New York that legally guarantees anonymity to birth parents or birth families. These, and the various other arguments offered by opponents to reform, have been thoroughly refuted with constructive results in other states.

The American Adoption Congress began in 1978. The group officially formed the American Adoption Congress in 1980 with the goal of championing adoptee rights, with emphasis on gaining universal access to original birth certificates for adoptees. The AAC incorporated in 1981 and has been a 501(c)(3), registered in the state of Missouri, since 1982.

We hope this statement may assist. We thank you for the introduction of S3419 and ongoing efforts to advocate for adult adoptee human and civil rights.

Respectfully,

Amy

Amory Winn
American Adoption Congress
President