



To: Assemblymember David Weprin
Senator Velmanette Montgomery
From: Marley Greiner, Executive Chair, Bastard Nation: the Adoptee Rights
Organization
Date February 13, 2019
Re: Support for A5494/S3419

I am writing on behalf of Bastard Nation: the Adoptee Rights Organization, the largest adoptee civil rights organization in the United States. We have a substantial New York membership and are a founding member of the New York Adoptee Rights Coalition.

Bastard Nation is delighted to support A5494/S3419 and back it 100 percent.

For over 80 years New York's adoptees have endured a humiliating, frustrating, costly, and rarely successful process when they request their Original Birth Certificates (OBC). The state's access system, established when Calvin Coolidge was president, is clearly antiquated, illogical, and discriminatory and sends a message that adoption is a shameful secret,

A5494/S3419 recognizes the absurdity of this practice and archaic social ideology. It restores the right of OBC access that all New York adoptees once enjoyed. Its simple, inclusive, transparent, and unrestricted language follows the process that ten states have successfully implemented.

A5494/S3419 is an important bill that is being watched closely by adoptee rights and adoption reform organizations and advocates across the United States. What happens in New York can influence what happens in the rest of the country and to the approximately 7 million adoptees who live here.

Bastard Nation and the organization members and partners of the New York Adoptee Rights Coalition, as well as New York adoptees will accept nothing less than full OBC access. We thank Assemblymember David Weprin and Senator Velmanette Montgomery, and the over 70 lawmakers, as of this writing support, who sponsor A5495/S3419 and look forward to working with them.

Bastard Nation is dedicated to the recognition of the full human and civil rights of adult adoptees. Toward that end, we advocate the opening to adoptees, upon request at age of majority, of those government documents which pertain to the adoptee's historical, genetic, and legal identity, including the unaltered original birth certificate and adoption decree. Bastard Nation asserts that it is the right of people everywhere to have their official original birth records unaltered and free from falsification, and that the adoptive status of any person should not prohibit him or her from choosing to exercise that right. We have reclaimed the badge of bastardy placed on us by those who would attempt to shame us; we see nothing shameful in having been born out of wedlock or in being adopted. Bastard Nation does not support mandated mutual consent registries or intermediary systems in place of unconditional open records, nor any other system that is less than access on demand to the adult adoptee, without condition, and without qualification.

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