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February 14, 2019

The Honorable Velmanette Montgomery
New York State Senate
915 Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12248

The Honorable David I. Weprin
New York Assembly
526 Legislative Office Building
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Assembly Member Weprin and Senator Montgomery:

I am a full-time paramedic for the Nassau County Police Department. I am also the founder and president of AMT Children of Hope Foundation. I write to express strong support of the Foundation for New York's A5494/S3419, bills that you are each sponsoring and for which you are providing strong leadership.

The AMT Children of Hope Foundation was originally founded by members of the Ambulance Medical Technicians of the Nassau County Police Department.

Without regard to race, color, age, creed or national origin—and in our capacity as EMS providers—we help save the lives of infants who have been abandoned. We act as a safe haven and accept newborns from a parent or guardian who wishes to relinquish custody. We refer to appropriate government agencies and other non-profit social service agencies capable of providing advice and counsel to pre- and postpartum persons if the need arises. Arrangements are also made for the dignified burials of abandoned and unclaimed deceased infants or children, alone or in conjunction with appropriate governmental agencies or other charitable organizations.

Last March I attended, as president of AMT-COH, Governor Andrew Cuomo's Adoptee Stakeholder Workgroup meeting in Albany. There I met members of the New York Adoptee Rights Coalition and other proponents of clean, unconditional legislation to restore unrestricted access to original birth certificates to all New York adoptees. I agreed with their position.

AMT-Children of Hope believes that A5494/S3419 is a pro-adoption measure that will enhance the lives of New York adoptees and will bring New York up to best practice standards of adoption and child welfare. We believe that every adult adopted person has the right to receive a copy of his or her own original birth certificate. AMT Children of Hope supports the right of New York adoptees to obtain information about their birth families so that they may learn more about their own histories.

I encourage you and your colleagues to enact A5494/S3419 so that adult adoptees can again have access to important information about their own birth families. It's time to get it right. It's time to make it equal in New York.

Best regards,

Timothy Jaccard
Founder and President
AMT Children of Hope Foundation