

Virginia Delegate Wendell S. Walker
Pocahontas Building, Room E304
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

January 17, 2024

Delegate Walker and Honorable Delegates of the Social Services Subcommittee,

This statement is furnished to express support by the [American Adoption Congress](#) for Virginia [HB550](#). We thank Delegate Walker for introducing this bill (previously [HB1969](#)). When enacted, this vital human and civil rights proposal will:

- **Restore unrestricted access** to original birth certificates for all adult adopted persons
 - **NOTE:** *We support the previously completed correction to issuance by the “State Health Commissioner,” the keeper of such vital records (as opposed to the “Commissioner” - Department of Social Services).*

Adults of Virginia have the legal right to obtain their original birth certificate, unless they are adopted. The American Adoption Congress feels that now Virginia is poised to join the fifteen other states with unrestricted access policy. **This belief is consistent with our [formal legislative policy](#) for clean adoption reform.**

Further, we expect that the proper reform in Virginia will help lead other states 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 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.

The American Adoption Congress is a member of the Capitol Coalition for Adoptee Rights ([CCAR](#)).

We hope this statement may assist and we thank you for your consideration to restore adoptee equality.

Respectfully,

Tim

Tim Monti-Wohlpart
American Adoption Congress
National Legislative Chair

.cc Capitol Coalition for Adoptee Rights ([CCAR](#))