

My name is Jamie, however in 1979, I was born as Hope Marie, in Norfolk, VA. I was relinquished for an adoption, which was finalized when I was 6 months old. In accordance with Virginia code, at the finalization of my adoption, the law required that my original birth certificate, which recorded the facts of my birth, to be taken from me and sealed. This was done solely due to the fact that I was adopted. Not relinquished, but adopted.

My birth certificate was not sealed at the request of my birth mother. It was not even an option she was given, because neither termination of parental rights documents or Virginia law offer or promise anonymity to a parent from their own offspring, since it is not a guarantee that would be legally possible. She did not want my identity or hers to be kept from me, instead that was forced upon us by the law.

Obtaining one's own birth record is a basic right that all other groups of people have except adopted persons, and a right that Virginia-born adopted persons had prior to 1972.

Virginia HB550 does one simple thing - give adult adopted persons the unrestricted right to obtain their own original birth certificate. Restoring this right is essential to ensuring equality for all adult adopted persons and I ask for your favorable report of this bill.

Sincerely,
Jamie Weiss