

**BY US MAIL AND EMAIL**

January 21, 2020

Chairman Dale Kooyenga  
Senate Committee on Universities,  
Technical Colleges, Children and Families  
P.O. Box 7882  
Madison WI 53707

Chairwoman Jessie Rodriguez  
Assembly Committee on Family Law  
PO Box 8952  
Madison WI 53708

**RE: SB521 and AB579**

Dear Chairman Kooyenga, Chairwoman Rodriguez, and Members of Each Committee:

We are national and state-level organizations that represent tens of thousands of adult adoptees in Wisconsin and across the country. We do not support AB579 and SB521. These bills are misplaced and should not move forward.

While we fully understand that these bills seek the release of information in instances where a specific court-related form exists in an adoptee's vital records file, the obvious intent is to get around current laws that deny equality for adult adopted people in the State of Wisconsin. "Getting around" that issue means releasing a court form with limited information instead of releasing a copy of the adult adopted person's *own vital record*, which Wisconsin law impounds after an adoption and replaces it with an amended record (though, as in many states, adoptive parents in Wisconsin may choose whether or not to request an amended record<sup>1</sup>).

We do not support AB579 and SB521. We ask that the committee set the bills aside and not act upon them further. We would rather engage in a more honest discussion over the real issue: whether Wisconsin---like ten other states in the country, including New York just days ago---will restore a right of all people to obtain one's *own birth record*, a right that all adult adopted people in Wisconsin and in the United States once had.

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<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin law provides that no new birth certificate be established if "the adoptive parents or the subject of the adoption requests, under § 48.94 (1), that no new record be prepared." Wis. Stat. s. 69.15(2)(a). Section 48.94(1)—which is part of Wisconsin's adoption law—provides that no new birth record should be filed if so requested by the adoptive parents.

We urge you to reject the misplaced approach of SB521/AB579 and work with advocates and others to address the inequality that exists in Wisconsin's vital records law. Dancing around current law, as AB579 and SB521 attempts to do, will not meaningfully address that inequality.

We look forward to your action in setting the current bills aside and working with you on a different bill that restores equality to adult adopted people in the state. We will also update this letter as additional organizations join us in making this request.

Best regards,

**ADOPTEE RIGHTS LAW CENTER**

Gregory D. Luce, Attorney and Founder

**BASTARD NATION: THE ADOPTEE RIGHTS ORGANIZATION**

Marley Greiner, Executive Chair

**AMERICAN ADOPTION CONGRESS**

Tim Monti-Wohlpart, National Legislative Chair

**NEW YORK ADOPTEE RIGHTS COALITION**

Annette O'Connell, Spokesperson

**TEXAS ADOPTEE RIGHTS COALITION**

Shawna Hodgson, Spokesperson

***Additional Groups and Organizations to be Added***

**Replies/Inquiries:**

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