

Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 5:34 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: jennyfujinaka@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1407 on 2/10/2011 9:00:00 AM

LATE Testimony

Testimony for HUS 2/10/2011 9:00:00 AM HB1407

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jenny Fujinaka
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: jennyfujinaka@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:

The act of adoption has a lifelong impact not only for the immediate parties to the adoption, but for the generations that follow. When family members are disconnected, it ripples through the successive generations until someone has the courage to begin a search. Choosing to search for members of birth family lost to adoption is not unlike genealogical research conducted by any family.

The sealing of adoption records by state governments that began in the 1940's is an antiquated policy that does not comport with current information sharing practices. Once the adopted individual reaches adulthood, the adoption has "expired" in that there is no compelling state interest in withholding information from the adult parties to the adoption because there is no longer an adopted "child" to protect.

Finally, Hawaii's unique history with "hanai", where birthparents share the parenting of their children with the hanai (adoptive) family, should serve as a model to promote sharing of information between parties. Hanai encourages acknowledgment of the various roles of all the individuals in contrast to the western approach of keeping secrets and sealing records. Many local foster placement and adoption programs have encouraged family members of native Hawaiian children to care for these children, and sealing adoption records does not serve these children's long-term interest in their native Hawaiian heritage or nor support traditional practice.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Committee on Human Services
Thursday, February 10, 2011, 9:00 am, Rm 329
Strong Support - HB1407 Relating to Adoption Records

Dear Rep. Mizuno, Chair, Rep. Jordan, Vice Chair and Committee members.

I wish to support HB 1407, as I was so fortunate that a sister born in NYC in 1950 was able to locate me at the furthest reach of the USA, here at my home in Honolulu in 2007. I vividly even now recall picking up the phone to a strange woman's voice and I still get so emotional thinking of her call. She was 56. This call was very powerful and really shook me up. When I told my son, he said he thought it was awesome. It was beyond awesome. I'm so glad she called.

Prior to contacting me, she had found my aunt first and then my brother. She contacted each of us separately over a period of several months. She requested of my brother and aunt that she be the one to establish first contact so that she could do it at her own speed. My aunt told my sister that if she had known of her niece at birth she would have taken her into her own home. My brother found a record of my mother's hospital stay to confirm our sister's birth. As my brother is an accountant and a number cruncher, I was relaxed about welcoming her.

I should say that my sister feels that access to birth records be restricted to persons age 21 due to the impact on the family members.

I flew back to New York State to meet her. When I looked in her eyes, I saw my mother looking back at me – her eyes were the same shape, though brown not hazel. I hadn't seen my mother's face for 47 years. I felt rude, but I just couldn't stop studying this total stranger's eyes. I knew she was kin; the DNA test later told me nothing different.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify,

Julianna FreeHand
Honolulu, HI

Sent: Wednesday, February 09, 2011 8:29 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: adoptionhawaii@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HB1407 on 2/10/2011 9:00:00 AM

LATE Testimony

Testimony for HUS 2/10/2011 9:00:00 AM HB1407

Conference room: 329
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jacqueline Frost
Organization: Adoption Circle of Hawaii
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Submitted on: 2/9/2011

Comments:

My name is Jacqueline Frost. My twin brother and I were adopted 60 years ago. I always wanted to locate my birth parents. I endured much agony knowing there was not a system in place to do this. About 20 years ago, I was fortunate enough to reunite with my birth father. My birth mother had passed away only one year earlier. I still yearn for that mother daughter reunion that will never be. My birth father wasn't in my life very long before he also passed. I have since found that I have 5 loving siblings. If Bill HB1407 would have been available to me, I may have had both birth parents and 5 siblings involved in my life!