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June 11, 2004

To: Members of New Jersey Senate
S 1093/620 SCS
POSITION: SUPPORT

I am writing to express the support of the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) for S 1093/620 SCS. NACAC supports legislation that will enable adoptees to gain access to original birth records.

Founded in 1974 by adoptive parents, NACAC is committed to meeting the needs of waiting children and the families who adopt them. NACAC supports adoptive parents, prospective adopters, and child welfare professionals in an effort to ensure permanency for children. NACAC's mission is: "Every child has the right to a permanent family. The Council advocates the right of every child to a permanent, continuous, nurturing and culturally sensitive family."

In accordance with this mission, NACAC operates a number of projects in the U.S. and Canada to increase adoptions of children in foster care, and to support families who have adopted. Our efforts can be categorized into four areas—adoptive parent support, recruitment/retention of prospective adopters, education, and public policy.

NACAC has long supported the right of adoptees to have access to their original birth certificates. As our position statements below reflect, NACAC continues to believe that adoptees are well served by having access to information about their birth families, and are entitled to that information.

Access to Original Birth Certificates — April 11, 1992

Recognizing that many adult adoptees have a need for more complete information about their birth families, NACAC supports their right to this information and supports access to original birth certificates to any adult adoptee at age of majority.

Access to Original Birth Certificates — December 5, 1986

NACAC supports access to original birth certificates to any adult adoptee at age of majority.

In the last thirty years adoption has changed dramatically from a service to infertile couples wanting to parent a child, to a service that finds families for children with "special needs." It is no longer a secret process; older adopted children have histories that impact on their future. Adoptive families now demand access to background information concerning their adoptive children. They recognize the importance their adopted children place on knowing about their past.

I encourage you to support S 1093/620 SCS so that adoptees can have access to important information about their birth families.

Sincerely,

Joe Kroll
Executive Director