

California Adoptive Parents
CAPFOR
For Open Records

Assembly Judiciary Committee
California State Legislature
1020 N Street, Room 104
Sacramento, California 95814

April 21, 2009

RE: AB 372
POSITION: OPPOSE

To the Honorable Mike Feuer, Assembly Judiciary Committee Chair, and Members,

CAPFOR represents a coalition of adoptive parents who support the full right of adults, adopted as children, who have reached the age of majority, many of them 50, 60, and 70 years of age, to request and receive their original birth certificate from the State of California. They should receive it under the same conditions and expense as any other citizen.

It is an honor for the parents of adoption to speak out for this group of citizens who were the most innocent victims of this practice of secrecy in sealing their birth records of identity at the time their adoption was consummated. Prior to the time of adoption finalization, the original birth certificate of these people had been the same public record as any other California born person. This sealing of the records was intended to protect the new family, but society has long since realized that this practice of secrecy was not necessary or beneficial and it must be corrected. However, we can not allow the corrective effort to be so encumbered with restriction and vetoes that it leaves many records completely sealed forever. We must continue to search for a better way to reach a clean bill which will restore the right to know about themselves without the restrictions or permission of anyone else being required.

It is repulsive to the individuals of the adoption community to meet with legislators and staff and hear them refer to these adults, many of whom are elderly adults, as "children" and also "kids". We must reach the point where the adopted adults are given the record of their birth knowing that they can handle their own affairs with all the dignity of other non-adopted citizens.

Considering the amendment language of this bill, AB 372, CAPFOR requests that you vote NO to avoid causing greater damage to the Family Code for adoption in California.

Sincerely,

Imogene Speed
Founder of CAPFOR
California Adoptive Parents For Open Records