

City of _____, _____ County New Jersey.

**Resolution of the City of _____, County of _____, State of New Jersey,
requesting support and adoption of legislation pertaining to adoptees' access to a copy of
their original birth certificate.**

Whereas since 1980, the New Jersey State Legislature has considered legislation to permit adult adoptees, and parents of adopted minors, to have access to a copy of the adopted person's original birth certificate and other related information, and

Whereas legislation to this effect has passed in the New Jersey Assembly in 1991 and 1994, and in the New Jersey Senate in 2004, 2006, and 2008, and

Whereas this legislation recognizes that family history information, which includes medical, cultural and social history about an adopted person's birth parents, is important for an adopted person's medical concerns and emotional health, and

Whereas the proposed *Model State Adoption Act* published in the Federal Register (2/15/80), stated, "There can be no legally protected interest in keeping one's identity secret from one's biological offspring; parent and child are considered co-owners of the information regarding the event of birth," and

Whereas the Child Welfare League of America in its 2000 *Standards of Excellence* for adoption agencies stated, "The agency providing adoption services should support efforts to ensure that adults who were adopted have direct access to identifying information about themselves and their birth parents," and

Whereas the NJ Division of Youth and Family Services Adoption Registry Coordinator in 2004, stated, "Despite the fact that the majority of birth parents we search for are not registered with us, 95% do agree to some form of contact with the adoptee," and

Whereas the Monmouth University Polling Institute in its April 2006 report, *NJ Opinions on Adopted Persons' Access to Birth Records* found, "9 in 10 New Jerseyans feel that it is important for persons who were adopted to have access to their family medical history or other information about their heritage," and

Whereas the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute in its November 2007 report, *For the Records: Restoring A Legal Right for Adult Adoptees* stated, "The rights of adopted persons, who did not participate in any discussions or agreements, cannot be 'signed away' by others. Adopted persons did not waive their rights to knowledge about their births, and others cannot waive those rights for them," and

Whereas Children's Aid and Family Services, Paramus, NJ, in 2005 stated, "It is our sincere belief that access to identifying information is the adopted person's right. We believe that this access furthers the interest of all members of the adoption triad," and

Whereas Spence-Chapin Services to Children "believes that access to identifying information is the adult adoptee's right and that this access furthers the interests of all members of the triad – adoptees, birth parents and adoptive parents," and

Whereas Catholic Charities, USA, in *Adoption Search: An Ethical Guide for Professionals* states, "Instead of secrecy and barriers to contact, there is an increased emphasis on openness and knowledge.... Both parties consistently report a sense of healing and wholeness after contact.... Having access to one's source is everyman's right."

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the City of Clifton, Bergen County, New Jersey, hereby goes on record giving its full and wholehearted support to the passage of legislation in our state that would permit adopted persons, or the adoptive parents of a minor, access to a copy of the adopted person's original birth certificate and related medical and cultural information, upon request.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent directly to the President of the New Jersey Senate, the Speaker of the New Jersey Assembly, the Governor of New Jersey and to the Members of the NJ State Senate and Assembly who represent this legislative district.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to every municipality in _____ County requesting them to adopt this resolution.

Date _____

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