

Honolulu, Hawaii
March 3, 2016

RE: H.B. No. 2082
H.D. 1

Honorable Joseph M. Souki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2016
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Judiciary, to which was referred H.B. No. 2082, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ADOPTION RECORDS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to simplify the access to adoption records process by removing lengthy and burdensome procedural requirements, thereby providing adopted individuals and their natural parents direct access to the adopted individual's sealed adoption records:

- (1) Upon order of the family court supported by a showing of good cause;
- (2) After the adopted individual attains the age of eighteen, upon submission to the family court of a written request for inspection by the adopted individual, the adoptive parents, or the natural parents;
- (3) Upon request by the adopted individual or the adoptive parents for information contained in the records concerning ethnic background and necessary medical information; or
- (4) Upon request by a natural parent for a copy of the original birth certificate.



The Adoption Circle of Hawaii, National Center on Adoption and Permanency, Cornucopia Consulting, LLC, Bastard Nation: the Adoptee Rights Organization, and many concerned individuals testified in support of the measure.

Your Committee notes that the stigma that was commonly associated with adoption in the past has largely diminished due to cultural changes that have affected society's attitudes and perceptions and have supported the trend toward more access to adoption records by adoptees, adoptive parents, and birthparents.

The adoptee has a substantial interest in accessing the adoptee's familial medical history. Recent genetics research has highlighted the importance of genetic history to an individual's medical care. This measure ensures that adoptees have better access to information that could affect their wellness.

Furthermore, contrary to critics' claims, the experience in countries with open access laws and states that have restored open access to adoption records indicates there are no significant negative consequences to the birthparent.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Judiciary that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 2082, H.D. 1, and recommends that it pass Third Reading.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Judiciary,



KARL RHOADS, Chair



