

Remarks to the Health and Human Services Committee February 14, 2022

Madam Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of HB2617 today.

After retiring in 2020 I finally had time to start my family history research and was eager to apply for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution organization. When I discovered a Mayflower ancestor, I was interested in possibly also pursuing joining the Mayflower Society. In the process of applying for various vital statistics records I discovered that in Kansas I was unable to obtain some of those records because my birth parents had divorced when I was a youngster and when my mother remarried, I was adopted by her second husband when I was nine years old and as a result my original birth certificate was sealed and a revised birth certificate prepared naming my adoptive father. As a result, I have not been allowed to get the vital statistics records from Kansas for my paternal birth father and his side of the family. I was able to get his death certificate from the State of California.

I am not a lawyer, but in reading K.S.A. 65-2422d it seems that the purpose was to protect the privacy of birth parents when a child had been adopted and was unaware of the identity of the birth parents and thus had had no relationship with that side of the family. In my case, even after the divorce and subsequent adoption, I continued to have a relationship with my birth father's family.

I would ask that you vote in favor of amending K.S.A. 65-2422d to allow an adopted person to inspect and be issued records of an immediate family member who is deceased, including father, mother, stepparent, child, stepchild, sibling, spouse, grandparent, great-grandparent, or great-great-grandparent.

Thank you for your time and attention. I would be happy to try to answer any questions.

Candace Braksick