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From: Meredith O'Hara [REDACTED]
Sent: March 29, 2021 7:34 AM
To: Office of the Legislative Counsel
Subject: Bill 23 - Adoptions Records Act - Law Amendments Committee: March 29, 2021

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To: All members of the Law Amendments Committee
Re: Bill 23 - the Adoptions Records Act

March 29, 2021

To the members of the Law Amendments Committee, the Minister of Community Service, and Department of Community Services staff,

First, I want to say thank you for moving forward with legislation to open up Nova Scotia's adoption records. We are the last province in Canada to do so and the practice of leaving adoptees in our province with restricted access to medical and biological information has gone on for too long.

These changes will mean that adults, who had no choice in the separation from their biological families as children, will be able to access their own personal records that are under the control of the provincial government.

However, I would like to register my disappointment with the inclusion of a disclosure veto that applies to both historic and future adoptions. The rights of an individual to access information about themselves and their genetic family should not be infringed. Being blocked from identifying information about your biological heritage will be a re-traumatizing experience for many people.

I believe all references to a disclosure veto should be removed from the bill or at the very least should only be applied to adoptions that took place before this law comes into effect as has been done in a number of other provinces.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Meredith O'Hara
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia