



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

## MONTGOMERY/WEPRIN ADOPTEE RIGHTS BILL PASSES NEW YORK STATE SENATE

VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY June 6, 2019

| ISSUE: **ADOPTEE RIGHTS BILL, ADOPTION, BIRTH CERTIFICATES, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES, ADOPTION REFORM**

| COMMITTEE: **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**



Monday, the New York State Senate passed the historic Clean Bill of Adoptee Rights (S3419 – Montgomery /A5494 – Weprin) to restore unrestricted access to original birth certificates for all adult adoptees. This will be the first time adult adoptees have such access since these records were sealed in 1936. It passed with overwhelming bipartisan support; 56 to 6. The bill now needs to pass the Assembly and be signed into law by the Governor.

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*“I am proud to have sponsored this bill in the Senate because adult adoptees deserve access to their own vital records just like any other individual,” said State Senator Velmanette Montgomery. “It is a reflection of the advocacy of thousands of adult adoptees for over 20 years. They deserve the right to seek answers about their health, their family history and their heritage. I thank the advocates for all of their hard work and my colleagues who voted in support of this legislation.”*

“The passage today of the clean adoptee bill of rights in the state Senate is a huge victory for all adoptees in New York State. I sincerely believe that every adoptee should have access to their original birth certificate, and I look at it as a human rights issue,” said Assemblymember David Weprin. “I look forward to shepherding this bill during the last few weeks of this session through the Assembly and to the Governor and make historic legislation law in New York State for every adult adoptee.”

“The passage of S3419 in the New York Senate is an awesome event, a major step on the road to restoring adoptee human and civil rights in New York”, said Tim Monti-Wohlpert, the National Legislative Chair and New York State Representative of the American Adoption Congress. Monti-Wohlpert, a New York born adoptee who also started a grassroots petition, with over 8,000 supporters and rising, added, “We thank our sponsor Senator Montgomery and her staff. Now it's on to the Assembly where passage of the companion bill, A5494 sponsored by David Weprin, will advance the proposal to Governor Cuomo for signature. It's time to make history and restore unrestricted access to original birth certificates for all adult adoptees. It's time for "clean" adoption reform in New York and across the United States. As with so many other issues, the Empire State will help lead the way to vital progress.”

“This is an historic vote and represents the first time the New York Senate has unequivocally endorsed the right of all people to possess their own heritage and identity. It also represents

the incredibly hard work of Senator Montgomery and her staff as well as thousands of New Yorkers and civil rights advocates. The Senate’s vote provides clear recognition that New York’s experiment in enforcing eternal state secrecy over a person’s own vital record has become unworkable, discriminatory, and punitive,” said Annette O’Connell, a spokesperson for the New York Adoptee Rights Coalition, a group of state and national adoptee rights organizations working to enact the bill.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### 2019-S3419

- 
- Introduced

- ◦ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- ◦ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Establishes the right of adoptees to receive a certified copy of their birth certificate upon reaching the age of 18

February 06, 2019

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Velmanette Montgomery**

Do you support this bill?