



NEWS FROM



**State Senator
Velmanette Montgomery**

**Assemblyman
David I. Weprin**

THANK YOU TO ADOPTEE RIGHTS ADVOCATES

MONTGOMERY/WEPRIN ADOPTEE RIGHTS BILL AWAITS GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE

This session, the New York State Legislature passed the historic Clean Bill of Adoptee Rights (S3419 – Montgomery /A5494 – Weprin) with overwhelming bipartisan support and still **awaits a signature from the Governor.**

This legislation would restore unrestricted access to original birth certificates for all adult adoptees for the first time since these records were sealed in 1936. **The bill will go into effect in January 2020 after the Governor signs it.**

The Clean Bill of Adoptee Rights acknowledges that the truth of one's origins is a birth right. It would allow adult adoptees or their legal representatives to obtain a copy of their original birth certificates or their direct line descendants if the person is deceased. Currently in New York State, an adoptee must go through the court system to request access to his or her birth certificate but the process is costly and has no guarantees. Many adoptees have spent thousands in court, genetic testing and private investigators to get access to vital records and learn about their medical histories.

“The level of positive response I received for this legislation was astounding. I have heard from seniors who waited their entire lives to know more about their identity and adoptees who now face serious medical conditions with no explanation. Adoptees and their family members continue to reach out to my office by phone, mail and through social media to thank me and share their stories,” **said State Senator Velmanette Montgomery.** “It is important that they have 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 overwhelmingly in support of this bill. **This has been a long time coming and I urge Governor Cuomo to sign this historic piece of legislation.**”

“There is no reason why adoptees should be denied the right to learn about their family histories, medical histories, and personal backgrounds. Today, the Clean Bill of Adoptee Rights will right this historical wrong and finally restore important civil rights to many New Yorkers,” **said Assemblyman David Weprin.** “I applaud my Assembly and Senate colleagues for passing this momentous bill that will change the lives of adopted individuals and I thank the many adoptee advocacy groups who worked to get this bill to the floor. **I urge the Governor to sign this legislation and ensure that adoptees are treated equally under the law.**”