

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6576

C 243 L 96
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Protecting the privacy of adult adoptees.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections (originally sponsored by Senators Schow, Prentice, Hale, McCaslin, Finkbeiner, Sellar, Moyer and Long).

Senate Committee on Humans Services & Corrections
House Committee on Children & Family Services

Background: Current law prohibits the disclosure of any identifying information about an adoptee from the files of the Department of Social and Health Services, adoption agencies, and the court, except under limited circumstances.

Copies of an adopted person's birth certificate on file with the Department of Health must be provided to an adoptee's birth parents and, for adoptions after October 1, 1993, to adult adoptees unless the birth parents have filed an affidavit of nondisclosure.

Confidential intermediaries often assist birth parents and adopted people in locating their natural relatives through information they find on birth certificates and in court records.

Summary: A process is established for adult adoptees to file a certified statement with the Department of Health indicating their preferences with regard to having identifying information released from their adoption records or being contacted by a confidential intermediary.

The statement is to be placed with the original birth certificate, or if no original birth certificate is on file in Washington, then in a separate reference registry. A certified statement may be rescinded or amended by the adult adoptee at any time by filing a new certified statement.

The court is directed to consider the certified statement when deciding whether good cause exists to open a sealed adoption file.

Birth parents who seek the appointment of a confidential intermediary to assist in searching for an adult adoptee must include in their petition whether a certified statement is on file and, if so, what preferences are expressed in it.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0	
House	98	0	(House amended)
Senate	43	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: June 6, 1996