Senator Andrew J. Lanza & Assemblyman David I. Weprin Introduced Bill to Provide Adult Adoptees Access to Birth Certificates and Medical History

ANDREW J LANZA   May 7, 2013

(Albany, NY) Senator Andrew J. Lanza (R-Staten Island) and Assemblyman David I. Weprin (D-Queens) have introduced legislation to allow adult adoptees to request from the Department of Health, a noncertified copy of an original birth certificate and a medical history form if available. In New York State, an adult adoptee has to go through the justice system in to order to receive their birth certificate or family medical records. Amending the

existing New York adoption laws will provide adult adoptees with the same access to information that a non-adopted person has the legal right to obtain. In addition, adult adoptees will be able to learn about their religious and ethnic ancestry as well as acquire medical information that can be used to prevent health illnesses which may be connected to genetics and their family history.

Senator Lanza stated, "New York State adoptees are currently denied their original birth certificates and in turn knowledge of their original families, ethnicities, medical histories and more. Adoptees deserve access to this uniquely personal information which belongs to them. No one should be denied the right to obtain information about themselves concerning medical or other personal information of the nature involved here."

Assemblyman Weprin stated, "The United States prides itself in being a place in which all citizens have equal access and opportunity under the law. When the status of adoption prevents adoptees from obtaining their birth records and knowing vital medical information that can be used for preventive care or to treat hereditary diseases, then, it infringes on a person's individual freedom as a citizen as well as the health of society as a whole. Therefore, our state adoption laws need to be reformed to recognize that adult adoptees deserve to have the same rights as other citizens in acquiring equal access to their records."

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