

Submitter:

Cassandra Adams

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB163

Hello, my name is Cassandra Adams and I am a late discovery donor conceived adult. Thank you to the Chair, Senator Prozanski, and all the Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary for hearing donor conceived voices, which are often the most affected, but least considered in these discussions. I am asking you today to support SB 163 as introduced, and please vote YES.

SB 163 contains vital protections for donor conceived people, and it provides us with the right to information about our own bodies and selves. Having secure access to our genetic origins is life-saving; it is a privilege many who are not in our situation take for granted. Our community deserves equality and transparency. Our families are beautiful and diverse, and we all deserve to have our lives and agency valued.

Although this bill will most directly affect those in the state of Oregon, securing these rights will benefit all donor conceived people, all our families, and all donors. We all deserve access to our information. Because so many of us have siblings spread out across the country, it truly affects our whole community. Ensuring rights in one state helps further cement rights for us all.

I was conceived via anonymous sperm donation in 1982, but I did not find out that information until I was 35 years old. I discovered through direct-to-consumer DNA testing, where I was shocked to find close family matches I did not recognize, and shocked to see that I was a completely different ethnic background than I expected. I was able to find my biological father in less than 48 hours. Anonymity is dead. It is a thing of the past. It is not only harmful, but it is not even possible, something recognized by so many other progressive nations in the world.

Because I lived with incorrect health information for 35 years, I received medical treatment that was not only inappropriate, but dangerous. As a teenager I was treated for a severe condition with a medical protocol that worked for my raising dad, because my parents led my doctors to believe he was my biological father. The protocol did not work for me, and I became more ill and suffered for longer before I finally, and thankfully, recovered with different treatment. My parents received no information about the donor they used. There was no way to find out any information about him. This lack of information about my own body put my health at risk. I also went through the pregnancy and birth of my first child without knowing my true genetic health history. Because of my true ethnic background and my unknown health history, I was horrified to know what risks I could have passed on to my child. My obstetrician was adamant that that I should have received extra genetic testing

and counseling years prior for my own health and the health of my future children.

Because of openness, I now have more control over my life, and over my health and the health of my family. I can make informed health decisions. All donor conceived people deserve to have these rights enshrined. We deserve to have accurate records kept, and we deserve to have our genetic history, information about who we are.

Thank you for standing with donor conceived people and their families by including this critical language. Vote YES on SB163.

Sincerely,

Cassandra Adams