



**Bastard Nation: the Adoptee Rights Organization**

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**Stop Safe Haven Baby Boxes Now**

**and**

**Corpus Christi, Texas 78412**

**HB2901**

**Infant Safety Devices/Safe Haven Baby Box Authorization**

**Senate Early Childhood and Behavioral Committee Hearing, April 17, 2025**

**OPPOSE**

**Written Submitted Testimony**

**by**

**Marley E. Greiner, Executive Chair**

This is joint testimony submitted by Bastard Nation: the Adoptee Rights Organization and Stop Safe Haven Baby Boxes Now. I am the Executive Chair of BN and the owner of SSHBBN, the world's largest baby box information, educational and media source website in the world, with hundreds of pages, I am including 2 supporting documents to this testimony.\

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Bastard Nation is the largest adoptee civil rights organization in the United States. We support only full unrestricted access for all adopted persons to their original birth certificates (OBC) and related documents.

Over 25 years ago, our Ballot Measure 58 restored the right of all Oregon-born adopted persons the right to obtain their OBCs without restrictions or conditions. Thousands of Oregon adoptees and their biological families have benefited from that measure. Since then Oregon had led the nation by passing further legislation to secure openness and transparency in its adoption system, access for the adopted and their biological parents to adoption files and courts records, and to dispel overall adoption shame and hypocrisy of the past and into the future. Oregon is by far, the gold standard for adoptee equal rights in US. Oregon adoptees and their families automatically expect to be treated with dignity and respect.

It is with great alarm then that Oregon legislators are proposing—and apparently making it a priority—to take a backward step and promote the secretization of adoptees, their records and histories with the introduction HB2901. This bill authorizes the use of “newborn safety devices,” popularly known as “Safe Haven Baby Boxes” that allow parents “who can't take care of their children” to anonymously stick their infant up to 60 days of age in a box in a wall and walk away.

No adoptee rights, birthparent rights, or adoption reform organization in the US today supports newborn safety devices. [Here is a list of opposition](#). A few weeks ago the New Mexico Senate rejected a bill similar to SB201 due to the effect such a “legal option” would have on the state's tribal communities and rights, ICWA and their own state Indian Family Protection Act which is stronger than ICWA.

### **We urge you: DO NOT PASS HB2901**

Our general testimony is below. We are attaching to this testimony our *Talking Points: Why We Oppose Safe Haven Baby Boxes* and *Safe Haven Baby Boxes: Five Concerns Beyond Unethical Adoption and Child Welfare Practices* regarding:

1. **Monopoly:** HB2901 is a a vendor bill that benefits 1 company: Safe Haven Baby Boxes, Inc, the ministry that created the Safe Haven Baby Box movement in the US and conducts everything from legislation to manufacture of boxes and controls the public narrative.

2. **SHBB Inc Control of Box Operations and Practices:** The ministry uses boxes and their locations as ministry advertising tools; provides unprofessional and inadequate company-furnished “educational” material; gateways public information about use.
  3. **Lack of Safety, Health, and Welfare of Mother and Child:** The ministry discourages pre-and post-natal care; encourages concealed pregnancy including a 9 minute video targeted at teenagers on how to hide pregnancy and birth from their parents; the negative outcomes for infants born unattended.
  4. **Lack of Regulation:** Boxes are unregulated and not UHL certified.
  5. **Cost and Funding:** Boxes are presented to lawmakers and public as a service that costs taxpayers nothing, but in the last few years nearly \$2,000,000 (and probably more that we have not uncovered) in taxpayer money has been allocated to pay for boxes.
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### **General Testimony:**

The promotion and use of Safe Haven Baby Boxes is anti-adoptive, anti-adoption, anti-family, and unethical. Boxes are a danger to the physical and mental/emotional health of mother and child. Abandonment boxes are a slap in the face of every parent who has followed standard and ethical child relinquishment procedures. The boxes are a slap in the face of the 6 million adopted people in the United States today, who unlike Oregon adoptees, are subjected to archaic and discriminatory adoption secrecy laws such as sealed birth and court records. They are a slap in the face to adopted people everywhere who see Oregon as an ally in the battle for equality. They promulgate the old secret system that adopted people have battled for over 70 years to abolish and that the State of Oregon rejected decades ago.

Baby abandonment box promoters subscribe, whether or not they realize it, to the long-discredited “blank slate” theory of adoption, reducing adoptees (whom they assume Box Babies will become) to familyless, historyless commodities—gifts given to strangers with no thought of the consequences to infant legal and psychological welfare, or that of their biological parents.

Baby Box advocates promote boxes as a consumerist “choice”—a simple solution for mothers so “desperate” that unless they can dump their newborns anonymously in a box- in- a- wall they will kill them or at least discard them dangerously, while simultaneously praising these mothers for loving their babies so much they can’t bring themselves to kill them. Saving babies from whom? When asked to provide evidence of the efficacy of Safe Haven Baby Boxes, who uses them, and why, advocates can cite no studies or any other facts—only an intuitive “we just know.” Any information that might be known about the infant and parent remains “sealed” in the files of SHBB Inc.

Does Oregon have a discarded newborn crisis? As far as I can tell, only 2 reported cases of discard have occurred in Oregon since 2017.

The fact is that the number of reported dangerous discard cases throughout the US has remained steady for decades.

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Abandonment device advocates claim that even traditional Safe Haven laws, with their anonymous “relinquishment” provisions, are tricky and dangerous. “Women demand anonymity,” so they won't discard or kill their babies. They must be granted legal anonymity in child relinquishment, the say, in order to be protected from shame and guilt. But what says more about shame than promoting a program where women are encouraged to skulk around dark obscure (but “prominent”) spots outside of hospitals, fire or police stations to drop their babies into a box, like trash, and walk away. “No one will ever have to know”

But people will know!

While the devices are touted for “newborns,” which for most people means just that a few days old, under current Oregon law, and SB2901, babies up to 60 days of age can be abandoned legally. Babies with a known identity, parent(s), family, medical providers, social connections; a birth certificate and a Social Security Card, and any number of other ties to their parents and community can be unceremoniously disappeared inside a box. No one will ask “Wheres the baby?”???? Seriously!

The complex and messy causes of infant discard are not addressed by Safe Haven Baby Boxes:

- poverty
- inability to secure affordable medical treatment and reproductive health care; decrease in reproductive rights
- denial or ignorance of pregnancy
- draconian immigration policies and practices
- substance abuse and physical and sexual abuse
- shame, crime, mental illness, dysfunctional families, social isolation, and poor communication skills.

The devices do not even act as a band-aid for what is going on— more now than ever under drastic cutting of social services and disregard for civil and human rights.

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## **Conclusion**

Safe Haven Baby Box adoption by law and policy creates and promotes unethical and deceptive child relinquishment and general child welfare practices, Rooted in shame and secrecy, the legalization of baby abandonment boxes denies due process, the parental rights of non-relinquishment parents, Under baby box rule adults stuck in boxes as newborns will be denied the civil right to access to their own birth records and history—a right that the State of Oregon has guaranteed for 25 years. Boxes and

their promotion send a message that concealed pregnancy and birth is safe when in fact, these secrets can harm and even kill newborns and mothers.

The State of Oregon should be promoting best practice standards in maternal and child care to address the issue, not dysfunctional and dangerous schemes that turn solutions to complex problems into legal no-fuss-no muss baby abandonment.

Please think carefully about HB 2901. Please don't betray Oregon's heritage and records of transparency in adoption and support and advocacy of adopted people and their rights. vote .

Please vote DO NOT PASS on HB2901 Thank you!

### **Attachments (includes links)\**

[Talking Points: Why We Oppose Safe Haven Baby Boxes](#)

[Safe Haven Baby Boxes are Dangerous: Five Concerns Beyond Unethical Adoptions and Child Welfare Practices](#)

#### **Further information:**

[Yale University Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics, Infant Abandonment Strategic Working Group](#) ( [but.ly/3G10BgR](#) )

- Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics at Yale University: *An Open Letter to HHS Leadership about Policy Responses to Crisis Pregnancies.*
- *Legislative Report: US Policy Responses to Infant Abandonment and In Infant Abandonment.* Yale Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics, Infant Abandonment Strategic Working Group, Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics, Yale University, November 1, 2024

# STOP SAFE HAVEN BABY BOXES NOW

## Why We Oppose Safe Haven Baby Boxes

Adoptee rights and adoption reform organizations throughout the United States oppose deceptive relinquishment practices that are rooted in shame and secrecy, lead to drastic permanent solutions to temporary problems, and create a population of adopted people who have no birth records, identity, or history.

We seek ethics, transparency, and accountability in adoption and in related child welfare practices, not band-aid and gimmick solutions to social, political, and mental health problems that cause newborn discards. Contrary to long-standing and established child welfare policies, the use of baby boxes (sometimes called “newborn safety devices”):

- Creates a secretive and shadow child welfare system that eliminates informed consent, a child’s identifying information, and any record of the social and medical histories of newborns. Baby boxes operate to eliminate a child’s right to identity by eliminating accurate birth registrations and records.
- Commodifies infants and normalizes “legal” baby abandonment as a consumer choice, without acknowledging the lifetime psychological consequences for the baby and the mother, including, but not limited to, abandonment issues, shame, guilt, substance abuse, depression, low self-esteem, and suicidal ideation. Boxes represent state-promoted throwaway culture; some critics call them instruments of child abuse.
- Replaces professional best practice standards with unprofessional and unethical “relinquishment” procedures. Baby boxes instead give vulnerable parents a right to abandon an infant out of convenience or ignorance, with no counseling, documentation, or discussion of established alternatives, such as adequate medical care, financial and material family preservation assistance, or crisis nurseries.
- Deprives the non-surrendering parent of the right to rear her or his own child. Baby boxes eliminate any protections to prove that a person using the box has a legal right to surrender the baby. Embarrassed, frightened, or abusive partners, spouses or family members, and even sex traffickers, will use (and undoubtedly have used) baby boxes without the consent or knowledge of the (other) parent, with no repercussions. Baby box proponents dismiss the real, dangerous, and violent situations experienced by women, simply advocating that “if your baby is taken, just call the police.”
- Disenfranchises natural parents—particularly the non-surrendering parent (usually the father)—of their right to due process by eliminating their ability to locate the child, thus denying them knowledge of (among other things) the dependency proceeding to which they are a party. State-based Putative Father Registries, touted as a safeguard, are rendered useless since records are filed by the name of the mother who remains anonymous by law.
- Creates at-risk adoptions due to possible litigation from the non-surrendering parent or biological family members who may learn of the abandonment and seek custody.

- Contravenes family reunification guidelines of the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (AFSA) and dispenses with tribal rights embedded in the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), which can also lead to federal litigation.
- Encourages women to keep problematic pregnancies a secret. The promotion of baby boxes discourages family and professional communication and eliminates assistance for sexual and physical abuse, mental illness, substance abuse, and social isolation—factors that cause nearly every newborn discard. Studies indicate that once a pregnancy is acknowledged and discussed the chance of discard almost always disappears.
- Hides crimes such as rape, incest, spousal and partner abuse, and human trafficking.
- Promotes and supports the non-profit ministry Safe Haven Baby Boxes, Inc., a million-dollar corporation that controls the manufacture, promotion, sales, installation, and referral of women to baby boxes in the United States. It has created the baby box market and lobbies legislatures, produces boxes at its own factory, installs the devices, operates a hotline that refers pregnant women to box locations near them, and holds press conferences when a newborn is left in a box. Rather than protect legitimate privacy interests of the infant, it uses boxed children as fundraising tools for its ministry.
- Discourages women from seeking pre-and post-natal care, instead encouraging dangerous and unsafe unattended births in the community, outside of a hospital.

Baby boxes do not address the causes of infant discard. Anonymously dropping a baby into a box and walking away does not obviate or solve the root causes of newborn discard/neo-naticide, which are:

- poverty
- inability to secure affordable medical treatment and reproductive health care
- denial or ignorance of pregnancy
- draconian immigration policies and practices
- substance abuse and physical and sexual abuse
- shame, crime, mental illness, dysfunctional families, social isolation, and poor communication skills.

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**Stop Safe Haven Baby Boxes Now! 6537 S. Staples Street, Ste 124 Corpus Christi, Texas 78412 614795-6819-  
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# Stop Safe Haven Baby Boxes Now!

## Safe Haven Baby Boxes/Newborn Safety Devices are Dangerous Five Concerns Beyond Unethical Adoption and Child Welfare Practices

### Monopoly Control

Bills to legalize the use of Safe Haven Baby Boxes are vendor bills that benefit one company, Safe Haven Baby Boxes Inc in Woodburn, Indiana, a **multi-million-dollar ministry that is the only source of the devices in the US**. It invented the Baby Box Movement and market, writes bills and lobbies lawmakers, produces baby boxes at its own factory, installs the devices, trains location staff, runs a hotline that refers pregnant women to box locations near them, and holds press conferences when a newborn is left in a box. Rather than protect legitimate privacy interests of the infant, it uses boxed children as fundraising tools for its ministry.

### Control of Box Operation and Practices

SHBB Inc says publicly that each box serves as an advertisement for the box company; therefore, the company controls the signage on and around boxes. (The signage itself, is a literal advertisement for the ministry.) Some locations have reportedly attempted to include their own signage that would direct parents to consider a traditional personal walk-in handover. They have asked to make information sources available about medical issues mothers can experience and localized information on medical, counseling, legal, and family services, etc, but the company reportedly refused these requests.

Instead, SHBB Inc offers their own information packet in an orange bag found inside the box. From what we have seen, the packet contains minimal and possibly wrong information. A box located in the Cincinnati area referred mothers to a midwife in Fort Wayne, Indiana, approximately 180 miles away. [The information sheet on post-natal problems](#) (also online in FAQ form) is minimal and unprofessional. The Ohio Health Review Board found the bag to be debris as per state law, banned it from the device, but suggested it could be hung on a hook or kept in some kind of container next to the box door. We believe it also ordered the company to include ODH or ODJFS literature with their material (we are not sure what), and have no idea if they have complied with them.

SHBB Inc controls baby box practices and procedures. Box locations are required to inform SHBB Inc within 2 hours of a drop-off; then prohibited from announcing the case publicly until the company shapes an official announcement that appears in news and social media. Last year a fire station in Alabama was taken to public task when the local newspaper reported a drop-off before the company issued an “official” statement.

We have in our possession copies of SHBB Inc lease contracts and Policy Procedures in Goshen and Munster, Indiana, as well as a 5-page scathing memorandum from the Goshen Clerk-Treasurer stating his concerns about the city's agreement with the company and recommendations regarding them. We are happy to furnish them to anyone interested in reading them. According to a recent news story, a dozen approved and city-allocated funded boxes in San Antonio, Texas, have not been installed because of the City Attorney's problems with the contract (see below under “Cost” for more.)

Finally, SHBB Inc runs its own private “family registry.” The company's low info orange bag includes a printed form that parents can fill out at the time of drop-off or any time later to establish health and social histories—and even include identities-- **to mail to the company**. This form compares poorly to



the professionally designed detailed voluntary medical and social history forms available to parents through state agencies across the country in traditional Safe Haven cases. The SHBB Inc form is held “anonymous” and as far as we know, is not available to appropriate state agencies or child placing agencies appointed by the state to administer custody, care, and baby placement, Nor, as far as we know, is this information given to the adoptive parents of Box Babies. The company for its own unknown purposes, seems to squirrel away personal and “private” information about babies and parents that in normal adoptions would most likely be shared. A comparison between the SHBB Inc form and the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (similar to other state “information” form) is [found here](#).

## **Cost of Boxes and Funding**

SHBB Inc sells its product and service to lawmakers and the public by saying the acquisition/lease of a box is a voluntary, local initiative funded not by public funds but by voluntary donations from individuals, ministries, churches, businesses, fraternal organizations, non-profits, anti-abortion organizations, and foundations.

SHBB Inc initially operated on these private donations, and still collects them. but through various 990s posted online we have documented close to \$2 million in state and local taxpayer funded allocations for boxes (there is probably more) for a “service” that is publicized being free of public funding and paid for by voluntary contributions. The company does not publicize these taxpayer funds and insists that does not take any.

Indiana allocated \$1,000,000. New Mexico, with no box law on the books, \$330,000. San Antonio, Texas, allocated nearly \$450,000 for 12 boxes that remain unpaid and uninstalled [due to the City Attorney's unspecified concerns about SHBB Inc company's proposed contract with the city](#). In 2024 and 2025 several states have proposed taxpayer funding either in baby abandonment authorization legislation or amendments to laws already in force. Some locations have taken money from COVID and Homeland Security accounts.

Trustees at Union Township, Ohio, outside of Cincinnati, decided it was OK to outright pay the approximately \$16,000 lease fee and other costs in their entirety with taxpayer money, not donations. When local pro-life conservative political watchdog Chris Hicks, who has no compunction taking on all comers, just not Democrats and liberals, visited the fire station, to see what the box was about, he found the facility empty with a working box in its wall. Hicks cried foul! He continued his investigation, chronicling it on Facebook and YouTube. Not to be beaten, the over-spending trustees dug in and hired an extra firefighter to babysit the facility and keep the box running. SHBB Inc promised to fund the new firefighter but did not. ([See video, courtesy of Chris Hicks.](#)) Thus, local taxpayers were dunned not only the cost of the box but for an extra full-time firefighter at union scale with benefits Hicks reported his findings (which included other violations of Ohio law regarding maintenance and sanitation) to the Ohio Public Health Review Board, His documented report led to the Ohio Department of Health shutting down out-of-compliance boxes until problems were fixed. (See below for more safety issues.

## **Safety, Health, and Welfare of Mother and Child**

Promotion and the availability of baby abandonment boxes discourages women from seeking pre-and post-natal care. Instead, SHBB Inc facilitates those in “crisis pregnancies” to undergo dangerous and unsafe unattended births and care outside of a medical and safe setting.

***Unsafe Pregnancy and Birth Practices:*** SHBB Inc claims that it suggests its callers seek medical and counseling services pre- and postnatal care, safe delivery, financial assistance, etc, **but its 9 minute video (deceptively called a Public Service Announcement) with 27K views on its YouTube**

**channel, is a step-by-step guide, targeting teenage girls, on how to keep pregnancy, and childbirth concealed--a secret.** The video panders to the weird idea that secret pregnancy, is physically and emotionally easy to pull off, and unattended childbirth is pristine, uncomplicated and safe. We have shown this video to professionals in OB care and child welfare, and they have been horrified by this message. Those who follow its guidance of the video could die. Their babies could die.

**According to SHBB Inc, the youngest mother they have guided anonymously to the box was 12.** Would you want your 12-year old daughter or granddaughter, or sister, or neighbor to follow this video's teaching?

This is the link to the [video](#).

Advocates routinely claim that babies delivered into boxes are "healthy and well cared for," contradicting their "fact" that their mothers would have killed them without the box option. We know, however, of 2 cases (there may be more) where babies were publically announced "healthy" and weren't and another case involving a dead baby. One mother has committed suicide.

- In 2022 a baby girl boxed in [Hammond, Indiana](#) had a stroke either during or shortly after birth and reportedly may suffer lifelong neurological problems.
- In February 2024 a baby boy left in [Belen, New Mexico](#) was immediately admitted to the local neonate ICU suffering from pneumonia and hypothermia, and was hospitalized for a month.
- In October 2024 an 8-year old mother [Idaho](#) left her deceased newborn in a box.
- In February 2024 SHBB Inc announced on TikTok that one of its mothers OD'd and died shortly after boxing her baby--a suspected suicide. (The video seems to have been taken down [but here is what we wrote about it](#))

## **Safe Haven Baby Boxes are Unregulated**

*Baby boxes are unregulated.* The USDA does not consider boxes to be medical devices, Furthermore, they **are not tested by Underwriters Laboratory; thus, not UL certified.**

According to the [Quality Inspection.org](#) website, equipment that should have UL certification includes (1) Electrical and electronic equipment (appliances, power supplies, etc.) and (2) Alarm signaling devices (smoke detectors, fire suppression and alarm monitoring). **This means that your microwave, TV, nightstand lamp, and even your power cords should be UL compliant, but electrically-operated baby boxes, that contain a multiple alarm system, are not.**

Importantly, manufacturers of electrical devices that are not certified and 3<sup>rd</sup> parties that utilize them—in the case of baby boxes, the state, locations and municipalities that authorize their use--could be held liable for death, personal injuries, or property damage caused by non-complaint devices.

Recently the SHBB Inc CEO said that getting UL certification is expensive and they have been working on getting it for 2 years. According to the Quality Inspection site, "A small and simple product could cost between \$2-5k, requiring several samples per test, and take about 3-4 weeks to complete the testing." More complex products can cost more \$50k and take over a month. SHBB Inc's published 990s indicate the company can well afford certification even for high-end testing.

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