

Chicago Tribune

New adoption law

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On Nov. 19, families and adoption advocates across the country will celebrate National Adoption Day. It is meant to celebrate the joys, the gifts and the love that come with adoption.

This year, Illinois-born adoptees have more to celebrate. On Nov. 15, we will have the right to do what we have been denied all of our lives: apply for a copy of our original birth certificates. On that day, the Illinois Department of Public Health will begin accepting request forms, thanks to a new law that I sponsored.

To many, a birth certificate may just be a scrap of paper. To adoptees, it's the key to understanding our original identity. Adoptees will learn their birth name, the place of their birth, and the names of one or both of their birth parents.

As an adoptee, advocate, and legislator, I have come to know adopted persons who have reunited with birth families and others who have sought no reunification. Some have adopted children of their own. Some have spent their entire lives seeking their identity, while others only learned of their adopted status as older adults.

On Nov. 15, we will be able to submit our applications for our original birth certificates. On Nov. 19, I am going to personally rejoice that I will soon learn the answer to two questions: who am I? Where did I come from?

I urge other Illinois adult adoptees to do the same. For more information on the new law, visit www.NewIllinoisAdoptionLaw.com.

-- State Rep. [Sara Feigenholtz](#), Chicago