

# From the Storyteller

March 3, 2012 11:06PM

Updated: [March 4, 2012 2:49AM](#)

“Are you adopted?”

That was the first question state Rep. Sara Feigenholtz asked me when I called her about this story. An adoptee and champion of the new law that allows adults to request a copy of their original birth certificate, Feigenholtz said it’s a question she typically asks when being interviewed about the topic. She wanted to know “if I had skin in the game.”

I am not adopted. My husband is, and for that reason, I followed the birth certificate debate and ultimate change to the law with great interest. In fact, once I learned it had passed, I printed off the application to request a copy of his original birth certificate, filled it out, and left it for him to sign.

He didn’t sign it.

Maybe it’s the reporter in me that was interested in having all the facts — or, as adoptees Jody Moreen and Lori McGuire said, the need to have the “first chapter of the book.” I wanted to learn the list of characters (insert birth parent names), the time (insert birth date), the setting (insert city you were born), and so the story goes.

I have learned while working on this story that each person’s adoption journey is as individual as their DNA. But thanks to the change in Illinois law, adoptees have the option to get that information if and when they are ready for it.

The application no longer sits on my husband’s desk in our den. After more than two months, he decided to sign it and mail it to Springfield with his \$15 check. He doesn’t have plans to do anything with it, except file it along with mine and those of our three kids. But at least he will have an original birth certificate — unique — but just like everyone else.

— Jane Donahue