

To Whom It May Concern,

I respectfully ask that you accept this submission.

I make this submission as I have an illegal birth certificate. While this was done for loving reasons it has had an impact on my life, and my birth cert does not reflect who I am. I see the baby who was illegally adopted as the innocent party with no choice at that time. I believe a right to your true identity is a human right. and that the means to correct illegal birth certificates urgently needs to be introduced. I am willing to appear in a public session at a committee meeting.

Illegal adoption has many complexities. And inevitably a number of people are party to illegal adoptions –this includes the natural mother, the adoptive mother, and likely a medical person or those who officially sign a birth cert. These adults in one way or another and for a myriad of reasons, committed an illegal act.

The reasons adult persons felt compelled to take this action are manifold. We know from testimony that these include: shame of being an unmarried mother, coercion by the powers that be, belief that a traditional two parent family offered better prospects for the child, married couples who could not adopt a child in the legal manner, those that wished to keep the child of an unmarried mother within the wider family circle, faith based views of pregnancy outside marriage, seeking to reduce the appearance of illegitimacy in Ireland and, no doubt, many more reasons.

In discussion of illegal adoptions, the innocent party, the child, seems to be forgotten in seeking a solution. In the past, there was an argument that children are not affected, they will never know, they will bond with their new family and so on. However, testaments in Ireland and internationally, give lie to this view, not alone for the ‘child’ that becomes the adult, but for the continuation of generational trauma.

From my own lived experience and from a familiarity with research and literature, I strongly recommend the government places the interests of the child – as they were – and adults as we have become, the deserved priority in this discussion and new legislation. This voice has been absent in any meaningful way to date.

A person’s identity is arguably an unenumerated human right that illegal actions have no right to deny, and no subsequent laws should with regard to international Human Rights law continue to contravene for their convenience or to avoid embarrassment of parties involved, or fear, or other reasons.

Where an adult wishes to correct an illegal birth certificate this process needs to be facilitated. The current cumbersome and expensive manner through the circuit court is wholly inadequate. It seems somewhat obscene that correcting an illegal error has such a high financial cost – solicitors/ barrister, Circuit court and so on. It could be viewed from entirely another point of view: has not the state the responsibility to ensure that legal documents issued by the state are indeed that, legal?

Any issues raised to correct the wrong of the illegal birth cert, are not the making of the adult with the illegal birth cert. That adult with the illegal birth cert cannot ethically be forced to be the ‘fall guy’ for a ‘house of cards’ made by others.

I ask that any new legislation heals the pain of illegal birth certificates and sets right that which was falsified in the past, and sets the state official record straight, and ensures those with illegal birth certificates have easy means to correct them. I ask for myself and because anything less is morally abhorrent.