



**Testimony of Jean Nasers**  
**Interim Director of Christian Adoption Services**

**Before the North Dakota Senate Committee on Human Services on SB 2327**

**SUPPORT**  
**January 25, 2023**

Thank you, Ms. Chairperson, and members of the Committee for providing the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Senate Bill 2327. My name is Jean Nasers, and I am the interim director for Christian Adoption Services.

I met with a young woman who wanted to learn more about the adoption process. She was about eight weeks along at that time. I explained the adoption process that must be followed in ND regarding the birth father and what would be required. She was parenting two other children and had put a lot of effort into concealing her pregnancy because of the effect it would have on her work, reputation, and other children. She explained that the birth father was not aware of the pregnancy. She was not sure how he would respond because he had been unfaithful to his longtime girlfriend when she and him had been intimate. We met consistently for about six weeks before she asked me to have the initial conversation with the birth father about the pregnancy. I called the birth father, introduced myself, and explained my role. I told him that he had been indicated as the father of the child. He was in shock and asked to take time to think over things. I respectfully verbalized understanding and agreement to his request. A few weeks passed and I reached out to him again over the phone. After I identified who I was he immediately interrupted me and stated, "I am not sure what baby you are talking about, but it is not mine!" and hung up. I tried to contact him a few times after that but was unable to connect with him any further. After months of in-depth research, I was unable to obtain an address for the birth father in order to further encourage his involvement or serve him notice of the hearing. I worked with this expectant mom through her entire pregnancy. About four weeks before baby was born, I told the expectant mom that we would have to publish her details, birth father's name, and the information regarding the termination of parental rights in the newspaper. At first, she seemed okay with this but over time it made her vary uneasy because it would be a record that anyone could see connecting her and the birth father publicly. After carefully working on an adoption plan for seven months, this woman decided not to move forward with her plans because she had no option for protecting her privacy or the privacy of her child or the birth father.

SB 2327 proposes updating and replacing the requirement for publication for an unknown birth father. It does not remove the current requirement for reasonable effort to be put in to contact a known birth father to make him aware of proceedings and/or to serve him notice of the termination of parental rights hearing. That being said, there are four main reasons why establishing a birth father's registry is essential. First, in today's age of technology and consumer media, publishing in a newspaper is not a realistic or reasonable way to expect a birth father to become aware of adoption proceedings. A registry will protect the rights of a birth father by offering him a neutral, consistent, up to date service where he can go to be informed and involved in his child's life and/or the adoption process. Second, a registry will remove the obligation from the birth mother to inform or track down a birth father. This is especially helpful and important in cases of inmate partner violence, domestic violence, assault, rape, incest, sex trafficking, and/or drugs or alcohol involvement. Third, a registry will protect the privacy of the birth mother, the birth father, and the child. Fourth, a registry will help professionals working with a birth mother in an adoption proceeding to request information through an established, reliable, private state registry rather than a third-party vendor.

Please support Senate Bill 2327 so we can appropriately protect birth father's rights and the privacy of the birth mother, child, and birth father. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony.

Sincerely,

*Jean M. Nasers*  
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