

Testimony Senate Human Services
Senator Kathy Hogan
SB 2321 – Open Adoption
February 13, 2023

Chairman Lee and members of the committee: My name is Kathy Hogan.

This bill is a constituent request regarding regulations related to open adoption. In ND, there are few laws related to open adoption and a mother who is also a graduate social work student requested this piece of legislation based on her experience.

When she went through the open adoption process, she understood that ND had no laws regarding open adoption, but she felt she had a strong enough relationship with the adoptive parents that there wasn't a concern. Regretfully, that is not what happened. After the adoption was completed, the family cut off contacts.

The choice a birth parent makes to place a child is one of the most gut-wrenching decisions that they will ever have to make. Allowing them to make the choice and coming to an agreement with the adoptive family on the type of communication that is best for everyone all around gives them some sort of peace about the choice they are making. Studies show that the more open the adoption, the better for the child's wellbeing in the long run.

This legislation has been modeled after the Arizona model of open adoption. Here is a link to an excellent resource on adoption structure. <https://consideringadoption.com/adoptions-by-state/>

Although I am not an expert on adoption, this seems like a common sense piece of legislation.

Thank you for your consideration and I am more than willing to answer any questions.