

Adoptions From The Heart

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Maxine G. Chalker, MSW/LSW, Executive Director

October 22, 1999

**Representative Kevin Blaum
House Judiciary Committee
Task Force on Adoptions**

Re: House Bill 1838

Dear Senator Blaum and Committee members:

This bill has the right idea and should be commended with addressing the issue of how to access the funds that have been established for counseling and have been accumulating. There was nothing in the law that clearly stated how to access these funds prior to this bill and women should be able to have their counseling paid for.

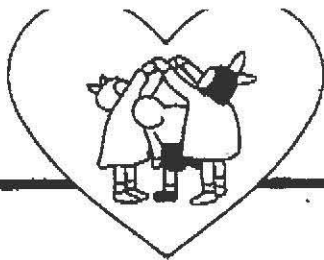
Again, the mandate of counseling of a minor birth parent is commendable.

Sincerely,

Maxine Chalker, MSW/LSW
Executive Director

Branch Offices

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**Representative Kevin Blaum
House Judiciary Committee
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Re: House Bill 1533

Dear Senator Blaum and Committee Members:

Thank you for your time in considering the following comments regarding the above House Bill 1533.

The 30 day revocation period is better than how the current law reads but it will actually be 33 days or more and it would be better to at least shorten it to 15 days, which would make it at least 18 days that an adoptive family would have to "hold their breath".

Twice it is stated that the revocation must be served in writing to the agency or ADULT. There is no definition of an adult and why would they have the right to place a child for adoption? This should read "a licensed agency or attorney".

The bill states on line 2 of page 2 that "Any other consent to an adoption may be revoked prior to the earlier of either the entry of a decree of termination of parental rights or the entry of an adoption decree". The latter would allow a legal husband, who is not the birth father, to interrupt an adoption as late as right before the entry of an adoption decree, which sometimes is up to 7-8 months or even longer if it is a public agency doing the adoption placement. This line should just be eliminated.

The contents of the consent should also be changed to include "a consent to an adoption under subsection (a) (3) may only be revoked within xx days of the signing of the consent".

At present, Pennsylvania is truly an "at risk for the life of the child state". There is no statute of limitations as to when a birth father can appear, demand a blood test and overturn a final adoption. Wording regarding an adoption decree being final should be included in this bill.

Thank you for your kind attention to the above.

Sincerely,

Maxine Chalker, MSW/LSW
Executive Director

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