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Adoptees would have access to medical history and birth records under bill waiting governor's OK

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By **Jessica Beym/Gloucester County Times**

TRENTON — Legislation to give adoptees in New Jersey access to their medical history and birth records received final legislative approval on Monday by the Assembly.

The bill (S-799/A-1406), approved by a vote of 44-26-2, would establish a system to allow adult adoptees access to their original birth certificates and family medical history. It now heads to the Governor's desk.

Under the bill, the birth parents of individuals put forward for adoption in New Jersey would have one year from the enactment of regulations to submit a request to the state registrar for non-disclosure.

During this year, adoptees would be able to contact the adoption agency they came from to get non-identifying medical information, including a family medical history, alerting them to any genetic predispositions they may carry for certain types of illnesses.

After birth parents have had an opportunity to opt out of disclosure, an adopted person 18 years of age or older, an adult direct descendant of an adopted person if that person is deceased, or the adoptive parent or guardian of a minor adopted person, would be able to request from the State Registrar a copy of the adoptee's original birth certificate.

Birth parents would be required, after the year allotted for them to opt-out, to submit a preference form for how they would like to be contacted: either directly, through an intermediary or not at all.

If the birth parents choose not to be contacted, they would have to submit medical and cultural information which would be provided to an adoptee when they receive a redacted version of their birth certificate.

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