

To: Housing Judiciary Committee
From: Sylvia Parrott
Support Bill H5672
Date: 3/3/25

Dear Housing Judiciary Committee:

My name is Sylvia Parrott, and I am in support of Bill H5672 which would establish the rights of adoptive/foster youth, or those in guardianship, to have post-separation visitation with their siblings.

I am in support of this bill because I grew up in and out of the foster care system and was separated from my siblings. I have no connection to my siblings today, and that has shaped me as a person. Siblings are the first friendships a child gets to experience. Which sets the tone for how that child is going to navigate friendships from then on. I can attest to the **impact** of being estranged from my siblings. Growing up I felt alone and didn't trust anyone, being disconnected from my family made me feel like I was in a den of wolves and a stranger to my own life. On top of that, I dealt with grief for the first time in my life at the age of 17, it was heavier than depression and it felt like someone was crushing my heart. Every time I saw siblings together I felt that wave of grief rise up in me. If I can sum it up it feels like a hole in my heart I can never fill. I tried with mentors and friends, but it was never the same. When I did try to connect with my siblings, some that were adopted or in other placements it was awkward. It felt like meeting a stranger who's not a stranger, those meetups also didn't blossom because we both had trust issues. I was in group homes when I tried to rekindle my relationship with my family and that in itself was also a barrier. When you live in group homes there's a limit on how much time you have outside. When meeting one of my siblings they wanted more time to talk, but I had to leave due to my unit leaving or I would've been marked AWOL and the cops would've picked me up. This misunderstanding caused my sibling to feel like I wasn't invested in the relationship and they stopped talking to me. In conclusion, even though I have healed most of the wounds from foster care, family separation is one I don't think I ever will. It's a reality I

learned to live with. I implore you to strongly consider supporting this bill, so we can have fewer youth who are deeply wounded. The only job of a child is to be happy. Thank you for your consideration.

Sylvia Parrott
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