

Simplify Access to Birth Certificates

Support SB1121 (Senator Locke)

The Problem:

Real ID laws require individuals to use their birth certificates in order to obtain a Real ID. Once Real ID laws go into effect, individuals will be unable to fly without this ID or a passport, which also requires a birth certificate. Many individuals do not realize there is incorrect information on their birth certificate until they go to obtain their Real ID, and the process to correct their birth certificate creates a barrier for low-income and older adults.

- This issue is of particular impact to low-income older adults who have birth certificates that are handwritten and illegible due to home births and poor record keeping.
- Individuals should be able to appeal to Vital Records through a simplified process to correct these issues when they have credible evidence of the error. The vast majority of states already have a process that includes online materials for the public to use to request amendments.

SB1121's Solution:

This bill:

- Clarifies that all applicants should be evaluated through the administrative process before being referred to court if Vital Records is unable to make a change.
- Ensures that all applicants whose amendment is not granted shall receive written notice of Vital Record's decision on their application for amendment, which advises of their right to petition in court.
- Mandates that the amendment process be easily accessible online so that individuals can fill out and submit forms without having to call into the office.

VPLC supports making access to travel easier for low-income and older adults and eliminating administrative and procedural hurdles that require low-income people to go to court unnecessarily.

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