



31 January 2024

RE: Bill # DRJAR074 Expenses

To Whom it May Concern,

Women facing unplanned pregnancy face a difficult dilemma, especially if they are unable or unwilling to parent. When they choose life, they should be celebrated. When they go on to choose parents who *are* ready, willing and able to raise children, they should be supported. We can support these women on this difficult journey by making the process of placing a child for adoption just a bit easier. This bill does that.

Background.

Idaho is among ten states that imposes a limit on the amount of expenses, and a very low limit, at that. Currently, court approval is required for any expenses over \$500 to be paid for the birth mother.

- While courts often approve paid expenses over the \$500 cap, it is time-consuming to obtain court approval for reasonable amounts over \$2,000 for the birth mother, because the cap is set so low. It requires extra time for the adoption attorney's extra trips to court, which costs the adoptive parents, and runs up the cost of adopting.
- Without a cap in place, the court focuses only on what is reasonable when approving expenses that can be paid for birth mothers, without having to find reasons to exceed a legislative imposed cap.
- Sound checks and balances are already in place, ensuring that pregnancy-related expenses are verified, approved, and then paid to the third-party providers.
- Since the States surrounding Idaho do not have financial caps, women are going out of State to find adoptive parents so that the birth mother can recover more of her expenses. And babies are leaving Idaho. With this change, more babies could stay in Idaho, creating more Idaho families.

Other States: Forty (40) other States have eliminated their caps on expenses.

This bill is the result of collaboration with Idaho's largest adoption agency, A New Beginning, responsible for about 75% of the infant adoptions in Idaho, and their adoption attorney, as well.

On behalf of my organization, Unplanned Good, I am writing to express our enthusiastic support of this bill. Almost all adoption legislation in this country is drafted to benefit the adoptive parents, this bill aims to care for the women who voluntarily choose adoption because they know it is best for their baby. Thank you for your consideration of this bill, showing that Idaho does, indeed, care for the women who choose life and adoption!

Thank you.

Theresa Marcroft

Founder and Executive Director, Unplanned Good Inc.

Promoting the Concept of Adoption for those facing Unplanned Pregnancy since 2010

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