

Proponent of HB2149

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In 1999, after a series of unfortunate events with a family member, my husband and I learned of the need for foster parents. We took our MAPP classes and became licensed. We never had any intention of adopting, we just wanted to be a place for kids to land while their families worked through their struggles. We quickly became the foster home that would take difficult kids, especially teenage girls. We completed our first foster adoption in 2009, our daughter was 15. We continued to foster teenage girls. In 2012, we took placement of a sibling set of three, ages 5, 8, and 12. They had severe trauma and the oldest had the hardest time moving forward in a healthy family. At the end of 2012, we unfortunately had to disrupt this placement and the children moved to another foster home. We maintained contact with the children, they came to birthday parties and spent time with us. In 2014, the children became available for adoption. They moved to a relative placement that was supposed to be an adoptive resource, after becoming pregnant the resource changed their mind. The oldest, now age 14, returned to our home while her siblings remained in another foster home. Another family was recruited through the website, they also changed their minds after meeting the children and reading about the trauma the children had suffered. At this time my husband and I decided that these children had been through enough trauma and decided that we would step in and adopt these children. In 2015, while continuing to struggle to process the termination of her mother's right along with all the other trauma she had suffered my daughter assaulted me and was arrested. She was charged with domestic battery and sentenced to probation and community service. We adopted the children in 2015 and continued to foster. In 2016 we were notified that our daughter had a prohibited offense and would have to move out of our home, or we would have to close our foster home. We had been fostering for 16 years at that point and had been fostering a handicapped child for 3.5 years. I was very upset that we would have to make him move or move my daughter out. I contacted DCF and requested an exception to the rule. I was notified that they would send it to administrative review. While it was being reviewed my daughter moved out of our home so in the end it did not affect our license. In that time, I found many more foster parents face this same challenge. Many do not adopt their foster children because it would cause them to have to close their licenses due to prohibited offenses on the child's fingerprints. I felt so strongly about this that myself and, then President of KVC, Danielle Bartelli met with Blaine Finch, my local State Representative, to request his help in making a change. Our goal as foster parents is to help our kids to overcome their past, to learn to function in a normal healthy life and to overcome the trauma they have suffered. How can we tell them that they are important enough to put all this time and love into and then be unable to make them a permanent part of our family because of a past mistake? Or to move other foster children that are placed in our home and add more trauma. Please consider making an exception process to this rule and helping our children become the best people they can.