

## JOHN WITTWER LAWYERS

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April 6, 2015

The Honorable Jeff Barker, Chair, and Members of the Oregon State House Judiciary Committee

*re: House Bill 2365 – Adoption Records*

Dear Chairman Barker and Members of the Committee:

I write in my individual capacity in support of House Bill 2365. I have been in private law practice since 1975 and have appeared in hundreds of adoption cases throughout Oregon on behalf of licensed adoption agencies, adoptive parents, birth parents, putative fathers, children and extended family members. I am a member and vice-chair of the Oregon State Bar Family Law Section's Standing Committee on Adoption Law and a member of the Oregon Law Commission's Adoption Law Work Group.

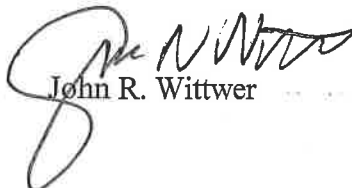
The Oregon Law Commission proposes "gut and stuff" amendments to the pre-session filed House Bill 2365. As so amended HB 2365 improves Oregon's adoption law in two principal areas of concern:

1• HB 2365 continues the adoption law reforms under Senate Bill 623 (2013 Oregon Laws Chapter 346). I endorse the explanation of this aspect of HB 2365 in the Oregon Law Commission's report which I anticipate will be a part of your Committee's record on HB 2365. Beyond that report, I only note that, although occasionally esoteric in nature, each of the proposed legislative changes in HB 2365 provides needed fine tuning to the major changes SB 623 brought to Oregon adoption law. That fine tuning will have positive impact on the efficient and equitable administration of justice in Oregon adoption proceedings.

2• HB 2365's express provisions for re-adoption (amendments to ORS 109.385 contained in Section 9 of the "gut and stuffed" bill) provide previously absent guidance, clarity and consistency for families formed by through completed adoption in a foreign country. I endorse and commend Robin Pope's written testimony on this aspect of HAB 2365.

I expect to attend the Committee's April 7<sup>th</sup> work session and will gladly respond to questions about this brief statement or offer further testimony. Please include this letter in the record of proceedings on HB 2365. Thank you for your consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,



John R. Wittwer