

**Rudy Owens, MA, MPH**

1208 SE Nehalem St., Portland, OR 97202; home: 503-232-3170; cell: 206 696-3740  
www.rudyowens.com | tdfuega@yahoo.com

March 21, 2016

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services  
Attn: Nick Lyon, Director  
Capitol View Building, 201 Townsend Street  
Lansing, Michigan 48913

**Re: Request for Original Birth Certificate for Rudolf Scott-Douglas Owens (myself)**

Director Lyon: I am writing to request that the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services **provide me a copy of my original birth certificate**, which the State of Michigan has withheld from me for the nearly 51 years since my birth . I request this be provided to me with a delay no longer than four weeks, which is enough time to handle a simple paper copying request, given I am providing you full and complete copies of all relevant identifying and other original birth record information. I would be happy to pay for a photocopying fee of the document.

- **Current Name:** Rudolf Scott-Douglas Owens (legal name as of October 2009)
- **Name at Birth:** Scott Douglas Owens (name that is on my original birth certificate)
- **Name on Amended Birth Certificate:** Martin Rudolf Brueggemann (the one given to me after I was adopted)
- **Birth Mother:** [EDITED FROM THIS VERSION]
- **Birth Father:** [EDITED FROM THIS VERSION]
- **Date and Place of Birth:** [EDITED FROM THIS VERSION]

I have attached the following to prove all of this:

- My revised Michigan birth certificate issued to me after I legally changed my name in 2009 (that includes part of my original birth name—and yes that was intentional).
- My court order, which changed my legal name from my old adopted name of Martin Rudolf Brueggemann to Rudolf Scott-Douglas Owens.
- Copy of my amended birth certificate showing my adopted name.
- Copy of Notice of Release of Identifying Information, from Lutheran Child and Family Services to the Michigan Department of Public Health, Office of Vital and Health Statistics, **acknowledging that identifying information can be released to me** (at the time when I had the legal name Martin Rudolf Brueggemann), signed by Jean Creech, April 20, 1989.
- Copy of State of Michigan, Wayne County Probate Court, Adoption Decree, showing birth name of Scott Douglas Owens.
- Copy of Letter from Probate Court, Wayne County, acknowledging receipt of notice from the Adoption Central Registry regarding consent to release identifying birth information filed by my birth mother on April 21, 1989.
- Record of Certificate of Registration for myself (then Martin Rudolf Brueggemann) with the Michigan Department of Public Health.

**Rudy Owens, MA, MPH**

1208 SE Nehalem St., Portland, OR 97202; home: 503-232-3170; cell: 206 696-3740  
www.rudyowens.com | tdfuega@yahoo.com

Laws that your legislatures have passed concerning adoption no longer apply to me, as I have already found my birth families, now for more than 26 years, in 1989. There is no longer any compelling state interest or legal or other rationale that justifies the state of Michigan holding an original record and what what is mine by birthright. I know my original name (Scott Douglas Owens). I have a relation with my birth mother and my family, and have had that for more than a quarter of a century. I have met my birth father. I met my birth grandparents before they died. I have met cousins, aunts, uncles, and even a half sister on my birth father's side. So, at this point, a request such as this should just be formality, as I have already been given every other legal document after my birth mother signed a waiver in April 1989.

However, your adoption staff personnel refused to discuss this situation with me when I called the Central Adoption Registry in October 2015. A staff member there returned my call but refused to discuss my legal reality that bypasses the need for me to fill out **Form 1919 (Parent's Consent/Denial to Release Information to Adult Adoptee)**. That form is not relevant, because my mother already signed a release form that released my adoption and original birth records to me in 1989. When I tried to explain I already know everything about my birth family and birth records, she still told me, in essence, "Fill out the damn form." It was one of the most embarrassing calls I have had with anyone in public service in my life, and I've spent decades serving the public now as a professional. I'm ashamed that this kind of service exists with people who are dealing with critical issues such as birth records requests. It was abusive and perhaps maybe unethical, worthy of an official investigation by auditors who review that archaic program.

Given I already know my birth mother after finding her in April 1989, this form is no longer legally required. The alleged purpose of the law is to supposedly provide a benefit to birth parents and adoptees, even in the face of overwhelming evidence such legal barriers are antiquated and all sides in adoption want to know each other. In this case, there is no longer any compelling legal justification to delay the release of my original birth record now. I already know my family. I already have my other birth records. **I just want my original birth certificate.**

I do not wish to play the games I had to play with Wayne County Probate Court officials, Lutheran Social Services officials, state public records officials, and others who delayed and tried to prevent me from even getting non-identifying information I was legally entitled to in between 1987 and 1989. In the end, I had to spend thousands of dollars and two years doing a biological family search that was successful, even when all that information was readily available in files of those officials who refused to help me or treat with courtesy and respect. That narrative is not one I am going to repeat again.

**So this time, I am cutting to the chase and copying Michigan media to ensure there is full media and public awareness of my case so you know this will be a public issue and not a private one that can be brushed aside back to this dysfunctional adoption office. I am copying multiple print, online, and broadcast media so they are aware of this pending request. I hope they will also be calling you and your staff to discuss this**

**Rudy Owens, MA, MPH**

1208 SE Nehalem St., Portland, OR 97202; home: 503-232-3170; cell: 206 696-3740  
www.rudyowens.com | tdfuega@yahoo.com

**issue and state adoption records management issues, and why Michigan remains among the most regressive of all state's in the face of overwhelming evidence all sides want open records. This is discrimination that Michiganders should not be proud of. The media I will have contacted with a copy of this letter and documents are:**

- Associated Press, Detroit
- AP Regional Director – East Michigan-Ohio, Chief of Bureau: Eva Parziale
- WJBK FOX
- WDIV NBC
- WXYZ ABC
- Detroit Free Press (including reporters covering adoption)
- Motor City Muckracker/Steve Neavling
- Michigan Public Radio (including capitol bureau chief)

I am asking for your leadership to simply make a decision as a leader that is in the best interest of the person impacted by adoption laws—the adoptee. You can demonstrate flexibility and do the right thing. I really would not prefer writing to you when I am 10 years older, perhaps after my birth mother has died, and asking for the same form. When my birth mother dies, I will get this form, by state law, and there's nothing you or others can do about it then. So really the power lies in your hand when I get it. And it should be now.

Denying this simple request would be an utter waste of time and proof of how government does not function to serve people and only serves to promote narrow interests and the power of bureaucracies. No benefit has ever come to me by the state of Michigan hiding birth records that were, before the 1960s, open to inspection by adoptees. I have wasted too many hours and resources dealing with this form of blatant discrimination because of my status as an adoptee, who lacks basic rights in my birth state. Therefore, I am respectfully asking you simply honor this request and show there is common sense and leadership among those who manage this system.

I would be happy to speak with you or your staff. However, I will not be speaking with your staff at the registry office. They were clearly unable to do anything more than be poor communicators and a poor example of how government officials should be in conducting the people's business. Adoptees deserve to be treated as full citizens, with respect.

Sincerely,

Rudy Owens

CC: Michigan Media, Michigan Central Adoption Registry, Gov. Rick Snyder  
Sent Certified Mail