**PETITION – WA inquiry into adoptive policies and practices**

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, say

In 2010, the West Australia parliament was the first jurisdiction in the world to apologise for the illegal removal of newborns from their unwed mothers. However, we are now one of the last states left in Australia to conduct an inquiry. WA Survivors have waited decades for the government to accept their moral obligation, to publicly reveal the truths of this painful past.
During the era of closed adoption, society treated teenagers and young women as a moral panic, punishing those who found themselves unmarried and pregnant. An estimated 63,000, West Australian mothers, fathers, sons or daughters have been permanently separated by adoption (DCD. ROADS, 2006). Adoption rates remained high in WA even after PM Whitlam created the single parent benefit in 1973. Survivors have been wrongfully burdened with a life of secrecy, shame, guilt and disenfranchised grief. For many adopted people, their lives are lived through the lens of pre-verbal/neonatal trauma (mother-loss), displacement and family estrangement. Hundreds of WA survivors have a lifelong VETO of no contact/no information held over them, against their will.
An inquiry would give survivors the opportunity to share their lived experiences protected by parliamentary privilege. An inquiry will shed much needed light on those who have yet to openly disclose and take full responsibility for their role in the states past adoptive practices. Importantly, legislation reforms are required for adopted people, so they can access the same human -rights as non-displaced people.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly: To conduct a full parliamentary inquiry into the states systematic and systemic removal of newborns from their mothers’ care through adoptive policies and practices (1890’s - onwards).

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