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**TESTIMONY ON 19-H 5706 AND H-5707,
RELATING TO THE ADOPTION OF CHILDREN AND
THE UNIFORM PARENTAGE ACT
March 20, 2019**

The ACLU of Rhode Island supports both of these bills, which help bring Rhode Island parentage and adoption laws into the 21st Century. These bills recognize the need for equal treatment of children born to same-sex parents and address the relatively new ubiquity of assisted reproduction. (The ACLU takes no position on one issue addressed by H-5707, dealing with the judicial enforceability of surrogacy agreements.)

By guaranteeing the right of LGBT families to establish parentage just as other families can now, and by establishing clear routes to parentage for children born through assisted reproduction technology, this bill will clear up many ambiguities and lacunae in current law. It also eliminates various archaic and unconstitutional provisions that are subject to challenge in light of developments in the law in the past decade recognizing the equal rights of LGBT couples and families under the Constitution.

As an organization that has in the past sued the state over a couple's right to name their child as they see fit, we particularly appreciate the repeal of R.I.G.L. §23-3-10(d)(2), which presently requires that a child born to an unmarried person must be given the surname of the person giving birth.

We encourage the Committee to have Rhode Island join the other states across the country that have modernized their parentage laws through passage of this Uniform Act.