

Madame chair and committee members, for the record, my name is AmberMarie MarlaGrace Berglund. I was adopted by Don and Becky Berglund on August 7, 2003.

I was born Amber Marie Work in 1992. My dad was sent to prison and my mom was involved with drugs and alcohol. My two older brothers and I were put in foster care when I was 2 years old, due to neglect. We lived with Don and Becky Berglund in therapeutic foster care for 4 years. When my parents' rights were terminated, we moved to an adoptive home. We were not treated well, but the judge in Bozeman said that we were unadoptable and that we needed to stay in that preadoptive home. Things eventually got bad enough between the mother and me that I was put in Intermountain Children' Home for 2 years. While I was there I had a practice mom and dad. They would rock me, and play with me and tickle me and discipline me. They taught me that I could trust adults. I had a therapist in my cottage that I met with often. She helped me with my emotional problems and my huge sad feelings. She helped me identify and appropriately express my emotions. She also led a birth-mom's group. You see, most of us kids in treatment believe that our birth moms will be able to come get us at some point and take care of us. This group helped me let go of my birth mom fantasies and be able to hold another mom in my heart. I was thankful to be able to attend school on campus since I always had big feelings to deal with. It takes a lot of energy to do school work and deal with emotions at the same time. At the end of two years I was able to move back to the

*Sleeping floor  
with mom  
and dad  
1992*

*Partly  
because  
of my  
brothers  
lead to  
alcohol  
problems*

Berglunds' and was adopted 9 months later.

My brothers were adopted by the family in Choteau and their adoptive parents do not allow me to see them.

Often when we drive by the court house here in Helena my dad will say "Look, Honey, there's where you were born".

I am so thankful for people and programs that help us kids get our lives going in the right direction. Thank you all for what you have provided. I believe that I have a future and a hope.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.