



Adoption Network Cleveland's

# Public Policy Agenda 2011-2012

The Public Policy Committee of Adoption Network Cleveland utilizes direct lobbying and grassroots advocacy to seek improvements in the process by which adoptions are facilitated and develop best practices for all parties involved in the process.

The main areas where Adoption Network Cleveland will focus its efforts during the 129th General Assembly are:

**Access to Records:** As introduced, HB 7 from the 127th General Assembly contained a provision allowing adult adoptees to have access to their original birth certificates. This follows a nationwide trend to allow adoptees the same rights as any other citizen. Unfortunately, this provision was removed from HB 7 before it passed the House. Adoption Network Cleveland is considering pursuing stand alone legislation in the 129th General Assembly to make this change to Ohio law.

**Funding:** As human services budgets continue to be strained, Adoption Network Cleveland remains committed to identifying creative ways to protect adoption and foster care services particularly in the areas of system funding, subsidies, kinship, guardianships and college assistance. Even during stressful economic times, policy makers must remember that **one dollar invested in adoption from foster care yields three dollars in cost savings for the state.**

**Siblings:** Adoption Network Cleveland understands the unique opportunities and challenges of placing siblings together for foster care and adoption. We will seek to advance policy changes that promote placing siblings together whenever possible, as well as address the difficulties that arise when siblings are placed in care at different times.

## About Adoption Network Cleveland

Adoption Network Cleveland recognizes adoption as a complex, lifelong and intergenerational journey for all those whose lives are touched by it. Founded in 1988, Adoption Network Cleveland provides programs and services to connect and empower all members of the adoption triad (adoptees, birthparents and adoptive parents), youth in foster care, foster parents, siblings and adoption professionals.

In addition to our outreach and service work, Adoption Network Cleveland focuses on addressing policy questions and issues surrounding the adoption and foster care systems. Recognizing that a unified voice is a strong voice, Adoption Network Cleveland promotes community awareness and social change by advocating for improvements to adoption policy, practice and law.

**Betsie Norris, Executive Director**  
**Recipient: 2011 HHS Adoption Excellence Award**



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Creating Futures*