

House of Representatives Standing Committee  
on Family and Community Affairs

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Secretary: .....

PO Box 1310  
GRIFFITH NSW 2680

8 July 2003

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To the Federal Minister for Riverina Kay Hull MO

Mrs Hull my name is Tony Donadini and I have been in contact with you earlier this year in regard to child support and access to my three children.

I understand from recent television reports that you are calling for submissions to a Child Custody Enquiry – enclosed there is a letter to the Hon Mr Larry Anthony MP dated the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2003, which sums up my situation. So far I have had no response to this letter.

I have also been in contact with Mr Adrian Piccoli and various support groups, and despite all of these people going out of their way to help me the system is such that after being separated for approximately eighteen months I have been denied contact with my children, no letters, nothing.

I am currently paying approximately \$165 to \$170 a week in Child Support and my wages are approximately \$630 to \$650 gross each week. I am paying \$130 to \$150 a week in tax, which leaves me with \$330 to \$350 a week. Out of that I have to pay \$660 per month in loans to the bank. These loans are in both names but my ex wife is not paying her share. Plus I have to support myself. Fuel to go to work, vehicle expense, rego, tyre, electricity, insurance, phone etc. As you can understand I have no life, I can't afford to go anywhere and I have to think twice on how I spend every cent I earn. There is some property involved as outlined in the letter to Mr Larry Anthony, it was handed down to me by my family, and my ex wife came into the marriage with nothing, being from a very poor family. Now she is claiming 2/3 of what we own because she is looking after our children.

The issue is she is using them to get money. I have been forced out of their lives, and so has my family (my mother, father, brothers, cousins etc) all of whom have every right to see my daughters from time to time. I think that the Child Support Agency should not have any right to collect money based on our gross income. A more fair way should be to pay our child support on a nett income basis. I have to say that the CSA can be compared to the Gestapo, Nazi Germany in 1945, the way I have been treated by them. It doesn't matter to them if you are in a financial mess or if you are starving to death, all they care about is to collect their money.

After I worked hard and for long hours trying to make some thing better for us and our children, I may be forced to sell everything I own, and end up with little more than \$100000. Compare that to what my ex wife is claiming (over \$220000) and the fact that I am forty six years of age, it looks like I have worked all my life for nothing.

Courts and counsellors are more interested in how you spend time with your children (entertaining, holidays, fun time, going out, parties etc) rather than how you provide for them financially. It goes hand in hand, if you don't go to work and get the money first, how can you afford to have holidays etc. I think there is no incentive for a woman to stay with her family, as the system makes it too easy for her to walk away from the marriage.

Another issue is the actual custody of the children. I asked my lawyers at the beginning of all this "what are my chances of getting custody of my kids?" I can look after them as far as cooking and looking after the house etc etc. I have been discouraged by the lawyers as they put it "you don't have a chance, as the Courts are not even going to consider it".

I find this unfair because I know I can look after my children just as well as my wife as I have cared for them many times in the past when she was away on interstate or international trips.

I also have support from family and friends, when she has no family here and she is relying on people that she only met recently to sometimes supervise our kids.

Having said all this I would like to thank you for your time and if I can be of any further assistance don't hesitate to contact me on 0429 444 470 or 02 6963 4890 at any time.

Regards, 

A Donadini