

From: Inspec (Erina) [REDACTED]
 Sent: Friday, 8 August 2003 7:44 AM
 To: Committee, FCA (REPS)
 Subject: Committee Secretary

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs	
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Secretary:	

Committee Secretary
 Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs
 Child Custody Arrangements Enquiry
 Department of the House of Representatives
 Parliament House
 Canberra ACT 2600
 Australia

Friday 7th August 2003

Submission Re: Inquiry into child custody arrangements and child support system in the event of family breakdown and separation.

Dear Sir / Madam

I Rod Steet of 84 Ridgway Road Avoca Beach NSW 2251 seek to make a submission to this inquiry for the benefit of all children and parents throughout Australia

I am a 40year old male currently employed within the building industry, I have been separated from my wife since November 2002 and we have the pleasure of bringing up two adorable daughters currently aged 10 and 8 who I love and adore.

Currently my access is every second weekend and we have just started overnight stays every Wednesday compared to the stories I have heard from fathers and mothers I feel very lucky and privileged to see my daughters as much as I do.

But I am and always will be their dad and should be involved in every way possible in the upbringing and emotional care of our children, I personally applaud the inquiry into child custody arrangements starting with the presumption of shared custody as a starting point, all children should have a stable relationship between Mother, Father and both Grandparents.

Within this inquiry we need to address the real issue of the situation the wellbeing and welfare of the children we have brought into this world, as they are the future of our country and the human race.

If we do not address this situation know with the help education and support services where will our society be as the divorce rate in Australia climbs. The custodial parent holds too much power over the non-custodial parent usually using the children as pawns making sure that they get what they want within all situations.

The issue of child support needs to be addressed as to provide a fairer system

for both parents as the current system benefits the custodial parent to the detriment of the non-custodial parent.

Both parents need to be able move on with their lives and set goals and create a future for the upbringing of their children not the custodial parent taking 60% to 90% of all assets and then have the non-custodial parents pay 18%, 28% or 33% of their gross income to see and hold them every second weekend or if your working situation is flexible enough and the custodial parent aggress you might gain some access through the week but this is usually very limited. Not only are non-custodial parents paying for the upbringing of there child or children as the current system stands but they are also paying the required tax rate determined by their annual income, the tax collected also helps pay the family benefit allowance and rental assistance which the non-custodial parent is not entitled too.

Most non-custodial parents paying child support within the required system are living below the poverty line and will always struggle to get ahead no wonder so many non-custodial parents leave their permanent employment and resort to the social security system, this only puts a greater burden on the tax payer. If we create a fairer custody payment system more non-custodial parents will stay within their current employment and support their children to the benefit of every one involved within the system.

I don't envy your situation within this enquiry because of the high level of emotions that are involved within a family break up and the vindictive nature of some custodial parents within the system.

We will never please everyone but we need to change the system so both parents are involved within the upbringing and support of the child or children. Children have the right to know and be cared for by both their parents, regardless of whether their parents are married, separated, have never married or have never lived together.

Thankyou