

***SUBMISSION FOR CHILD CUSTODY AND CHILD SUPPORT***

FROM:

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Representatives Standing Com-  
on Family and Community Affairs

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[REDACTED] Submission

Walked away from my marriage with a \$20,000 debt, plus clothes and computer – that is all. The ex-wife gets \$400/fortnight child support for one child who is four years old at present. (This child does have Tyrosanaemia Type I - liver problems which all medication is paid for by health care card). Currently I am limited with access due to my job as an ambulance officer where I work seven days/24 hours per day on call with two days off, then seven days/24 hours per day on call with five days off. Medically I feel I am more qualified to look after my son than my ex-wife who did not even finish year 10 and my current partner being a Registered Nurse/Midwife of extensive experience in caring for children and dispensing medications. This was not taken into account during our mediation as my ex-wife was given legal-aid and I was limited in what I could afford at the time, as in paying child support and paying the marital home mortgage. Due to dirt raking and public slander the ex-wife was believed to be the victim and thus gained full custody of my son. I was advised by my solicitor that due to the fact that she was entitled to legal aid and I wasn't it could drag on indefinitely. With paying child support and trying to start afresh I did not have the finances to fight this decision. Child support agency has been non responsive to any of my claims. I now have a new partner and recently a new addition to the family, however my partner was working full time up until problems arose during the pregnancy and she was medically unfit to work. Therefore I was supporting my partner and her two children as well as paying this astronomical child support. The child support agency did not give me any lee way at all. The two children of my partner should be supported by their father (who was paying \$30.00 per month for two children) who openly bragged about earning \$1500/week cash in hand. Child

support agencies was told repeatedly about this plus his whereabouts and approximate location of work. Nothing was ever done about it.

For six months when my new partner was not earning a living, I have been supporting her, her daughter, my new child. My child support was not adjusted, I am still paying \$388/fortnight for one child which I think is absolutely ridiculous while my ex-wife can have somebody in to clean the house, have a gardener to mow the lawns, have her fingernails done fortnightly, have someone to do her ironing and shop in Sydney every three months while I have trouble putting a respectable meal on the table for my new family. Where is the justice in this. My ex-wife is quite capable of earning a good living but she reduces my access and her working hours so that the child support is not reduced. I feel that my ex-wife limits my access to my son as if I have any more overnight access it will affect the amount I pay in child support. Please note that it is only overnight access that is counted towards child support ie I pick up my son at 0730 and then return him at 1800. These hours are not counted because it is not overnight. My son goes to bed at 1930 each night – where is the justice in working child support out.

This type of manipulation of the system should be investigated – the second family does not get a fair go. I have a disabled daughter that requires at least 4-5 hours/day extra stimulation, plus fortnightly visits to the physiotherapist and monthly visits to the ENT specialist in Canberra but my child support is still this astronomical amount. Sometimes I have to borrow money of my mother-in-law to be able to take my child to doctors appointments. Where is the justice.in this so called fair system.

#### ████████ Story

I left my husband with nothing apart from a \$20,000 debt and three children. I had to go bankrupt to be able to support my children. Child support agency assessed my ex-husband to pay \$26.00/month for three children – however I knew that he was earning a lot more money – he openly bragged about how much he earned to my own father. He was able to see the children whenever he wanted – and then virtually kidnapped my 10year old at the beginning of this year. At this stage I am out of pocket \$2500 and I am unable to fight any more due to my new partners child support commitments. My ex-

husband was able to gain legal-aid and because I had remarried I was unable to get assistance – even though the child was not my new partner's. My new partner has been supporting my children since late 2000 – giving extra financial assistance where he can but he is unable to benefit from child support agency. I feel child support agency are tunnelled vision – supporting where it is easiest. Take from those that earn a salary on the government pay system and don't worry about the rest. They will not listen to reason even though we feel we have a good case.

This agency needs investigation as soon as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit.

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Any further information required please do not hesitate to call [REDACTED]