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Secretary:

From: Wayne Perry [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 7 August 2003 3:02 PM
To: Committee, FCA (REPS)
Subject: Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements

Committee Secretary,

Please accept my submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry to Child Custody Arrangements.

I feel the current system is unfairly biased towards the mother of the child. I have a 3 year old daughter who resides with her mother. During my brief attendance in Family Law Court I was given the impression by my solicitor that I would be wasting my time applying for any more than what is considered the normal contact with my daughter.

I feel that the Family Law Court should look at both parents situations, prior history etc before passing an order that basically determines who is the prime carer of the child. If the father can provide the same environment, care etc for the child I fail to see why the father can't have equal custody of that child.

Take my situation as an example. I own a 3 bedroom house 20 minutes from my daughters mothers house. I have been employed for the last 14 years by a large company. I have willingly provided significant financial support since our separation. To summarise I can equally provide the love and care my daughter requires and yet if I were to take the matter to the Family Law Court, the court would rule against me.

Of course the best interests of the child must be of paramount consideration. I totally understand that there are parents who have acted incorrectly in the past and this must be taken into consideration. But is it fair that every father is dealt with unjustly because of the inappropriate actions of so few.

Presently costs of law proceedings prevent most average fathers from pursuing these matters in court. It is basically impossible to pay court costs, child support payments and continue to have some sort of life yourself. All of this when a Family Law Court will probably rule against you anyway.

In closing I would like to indicate how much I value the opportunity to express my opinions regarding issues as important as our children's well being and future.

Yours Sincerely,

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