

**DIANE PARKER**11 GALLIPOLI RD  
COFFS HARBOUR 2450House of Representatives Standing Committee  
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No:

60

29 July 2003

Date Received:

30-7-03

Secretary

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

Dear Committee Secretary

Please find attached letters in regard **INQUIRY INTO CHILD CUSTODY ARRANGEMENTS IN THE EVENT OF FAMILY SEPERATION** (b) whether the existing child support formula works fairly for both parents in relation to the care of, and contact with, their children.

I feel that my situation addresses all points in regard to the Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry however the issue of child support formula and peroficely REASON 3 of the Child Support change of Assesment, The costs of maintaining the children are significantly affected because it costs extra to care for, educate or train in the way that you and the other parent intended.

The legislation needs to be reviewed and hopefully changed (please see attached documents) Everyone at the Child Support Agency that I have spoken to in the last 18 months all agree this reason in particular is a hard one to work on because of the situation of a parent leaving prior to school age. I feel that I would be able to submit my experiences and opions across in relation to this inquiry either in person or by phone. Please do not hesitate to contact me in regard to this letter on the phone numbers above as I feel very passionate about this subject. Varies letters have been submitted by my self in regard to this matter.



Yours sincerely,

Diane Parker

I wish to put my opinion across on reason 3 .

My Ex husband [REDACTED] has had very little contact since leaving the family in 1993 , appoxamently 50 hrs in nearly 10 years , my boys were 3.2 years 18 months and I was 6 months pregnant with our third child , he has had the boys approximately 5 weekends ,the last time he had them overnight was about 1999 for two nights he flew up to Co. [REDACTED] we took him on a tour of Co. [REDACTED] the boys took him to their school he was well aware even before this trip that the boys were in a catholic school he has never said anything only up untill jan 2002 for his latest Child Support Assesment , upon viewing the school all he could say was "nice grounds to play on "the religious aspect of the school did not come into the conversation at all I have come to reliase that the decisions made in my boys lives are totally up to me , what to give them for lunch ,any medical decisions that need to be made ,what to buy them to wear ,can they sleep at a friends house ,can they play a certain sport the list goes on and on .As a parent my day is full of decisions I need to make in regard to my boys day to day living , however the most important decision education is not up to me ? . I have not taken them out of one school to put in another ,I am a Catholic ,D [REDACTED] is Catholic ,My boys are all Catholic [REDACTED] attended a Christian preschool with [REDACTED] consent , The boys were all baptised Catholic this was done with [REDACTED] consent , The fact that [REDACTED] shows no interest in our boys but when it suits him he can say something so funny as "it was not my intention " . [REDACTED] objection is purely financial . I can honestly say it was our intention to do give the boys a loving , caring upbringing one that involved their mother being home for them before and after school,a father that iwas going to play a very active role in their upbringing , a good Christian education and to teach them respect for others as well as themselves . As our situation has changed I am trying to give my boys the best possible life I can give them .The major part of this is their education everything filters off this religion , beliefs , morals , values discipline even the peers they come into contact with the school is a fantastic one and so the High School that [REDACTED] attends is of equal standing the teachers are caring ,understanding ,compassionate .Being a single parent I feel that the primary and high school system that my boys are all involved in form part of my support network ,which is so important as a single parent of three boys .

I feel very passionate in regard to this Child Support Leghislation I have spoken to my local member of pariment about this ,several letters have been written to try and get this legislation reviewed and hopefully changed .,

**Mrs DIANE PARKER**11 GALLIPOLI RD  
COFFS HARBOUR 2450Orig. nr. 2010  
2010  
19 July 2003

Dear MR HARTSUKER

I am writing to you with the hope of some assistance I would like to change a certain legislation in regard to child support , in Nov 2001 my ex-husband had his child support reduced to \$20.00 per month down from \$692.00 per month ,I appealed against this decision and have had his child support increased to \$932.00 per month , I was very pleased with the outcome and the level of professional , friendly and prompt service I have received from the child support agency in Newcastle .

Why I am writing to you is that as part of the appeal ,I needed to list my reasons 1-10 why my maintenance should be increased , reasons 2,3 and 8 were addressed by myself . Reason 2 was [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are attending speech therapy which costs money , Reason 3 was that the education they are presently receiving is attendance at the local catholic school St Augustines , and Reason 8 was the income that is produced by Darren he could obviously afford more than \$20.00 per month .

The application was sent to my ex-husband , he in turn addressed my reasons ,the application was then sent to child support and a Telephone Conference was arranged . Mr [REDACTED] was sent down as my case officer . Whilst in the conference he informed me that Reason 2 & 8 will be approved yet Reason 3 did not satisfy the legislation ,the legislation stating that both parties need to be in agreement with the education and training of the children , this reason is the point of my letter .

[REDACTED] has had very little contact with the children ( he left when I was 6 months pregnant with our 3rd child , [REDACTED] was 3yrs 2months and [REDACTED] was 18 months old ) he has spent a total of approximately 40 hours with the eldest boys , and maybe 30 hours with the youngest , my children are now 8 years old , 10 years old and 11.5 years old .It was my decision to send them to St Augustines alone as [REDACTED] has no impact on my boys life ( his decision entirely ) I felt I was solely responsible for that decision .

Upon receiving the paperwork from Mr Parker I noted his response to Reason 3 being "It was not my intention to send them to a private school " St Augustines is not a private school but a catholic school , netherless a school with school fees . [REDACTED] has indicated to me over the past 8/5 years that he really has no interest with the boys , my boys do not receive birthday cards , Xmas cards , not even a telephone call every now and then , nothing at all from their dad , yet he has the right to say " that it was not my intention for the children to go thro a "catholic school" . I am hoping to get this part of the Child Support legislation changed , If it can be proved that the other parent has no interest in the children by way of a letter from their school , a doctors letter , a letter from their coach , a statutory declaration stating that the other parent does not show interest in their children , letters from friends , relatives etc , maybe all of the above or something similar . I feel that the legislation needs to be reviewed , at this day and age were there are so many marriage break-ups , with fathers /mothers not seeing their children ,that every case needs to be taken on its merits .

I feel that if certain requirements are met with, (formal /informal letters ) that the sole responsibility should be allowed .He has had nothing to do with his boys yet when it suits him to get out of paying maintenance he is allowed to have a say in their education , it seems unbelievable that this is allowed , as I have stated earlier I am very happy with the decision , and level of professionalism that I have encountered by the Child Support Agency in Newcastle . my letter is for the sole purpose of , getting the legislation reviewed in regard to Reason 3 . It deeply hurt me when for 8.5 years I have left all doors open in regard to [REDACTED] playing a role in his boys life , yet he turns around and says "it was not my intention for the children to go to a private school "I realise that my boys will still be attending St Augustines with the maintenance that I will be receiving , so indirectly [REDACTED] will be paying for their education , however fathers should not be able to have a say in their children's life when it suits them . Please find attached some documents relating to this case

Please do not hesitate to contact me on 0409 844 194 I would certainly love to discuss this letter with you .My understanding is that you will forward this letter on to other appropriate people in parliament for their perusal . I would love an update on my letter , just to keep me informed , I am trusting that you will give this letter the attention that I am asking for .

Thanking you for your time and attention

