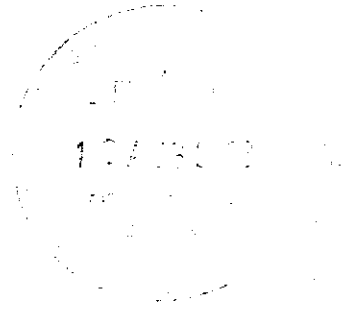


From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 7 August 2003 11:26 PM
To: Committee, FCA (REPS)
Subject: regards to child custody arrangements inquiry

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs	
Submission No:	1439
Date Received:	7-8-03
Secretary:	

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs
Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry
Parliament House
Canberra
Committee Secretary



I wish to put my views in relation to the terms of Reference for the enquiry into child custody and child support.

My situation is that of a single parent with three children [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. My husband and father of the children left the family after [REDACTED] of marriage [REDACTED] ago. I considered us to be your average family leading a happy life in a busy world with difficulties many families have to contend with. My children were doing well at school, sport and socially happy with their life. It was in the best interests of my children for us to remain a family.

This is what the laws need to focus on keeping families together. If we are putting the Childs needs paramount families need to stay together with supports as necessary. Our system facilitates the destruction of family's by making it so easy to leave. Quick, cheap and simple divorce in a court that is called the Family court. These Laws must have been established to protect those experiencing violence and abuse and rightly so.

We have an alternate weekend arrangement with half-holidays. My daughters generally choose not to spend much time with their father because he left. [REDACTED] view was he did not love them enough to stay and that we need to stop fathers from leaving. Are these reasons to rebut a 50/50 parenting arrangement? My daughters are older and able to express what they want although I am sad they don't have a balance of a mothers and fathers influence. My son greatly misses a dad who was totally apart of his life 100% prior to leaving. He has a mother who is 100% apart of his life. What happens now is that

he losses apart of his mother to be with a part of his father. Losses a greater part of his father which is his fathers choice. He misses his mother while with his father and even more so misses his father.

Circumstances of family breakdown need to be identified and responsibility taken. The parenting rights cannot be seen as equal because one parent may have had a greater role in the loss of this family. This must present a further reason to rebut equal parenting rights.

Acknowledgement must been given to the parent who gives more to the child in terms of their presence, finances, actively involved in school, sport friends, security not complicating the situation with other partners or families maybe even love. So over a period of time the other parent has less right to a 50/50 agreement.

I am the main carer for my children so with the belief we need to care for the carer in order to best support the children. My mental and physical health is paramount to the wellbeing of my children.

The child support formula identifies a portion of my husband's salary that is seen as his share of the financial needs of our 3 children. A greater proportion of my salary goes to the care of the children. As a nurse I have been able to increase my income by working longer hours especially on alternate weekends when my husband has our son. This has also helped me in being able to cope with my son being taken from me and going where I cannot go. I now find my husband will benefit from me increasing my income by paying less child support. Which is not fair when a greater portion of my income goes to the children. I have tried to keep the children doing all the activities they where doing prior to their father leaving.

Change the emphasis from what happens after family breakdown to what can be done to keep families together this will give the most benefit to our children.

Yours sincerely

