

5<sup>th</sup> August 2003

House of Representatives Standing Committee  
on Family and Community Affairs

Submission No: 1001

Date Received: 8-8-03

Secretary: .....

TO COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
FAMILY & COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

## Inquiry into child custody

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

I WOULD LIKE TO FORMALLY SUBMIT THIS LETTER REPRESENTING NOT ONLY MYSELF, BUT ALSO THE MAJORITY OF FATHERS THAT HAVE FACED THE HARSH REALITY OF PARENT/CHILD SEPARATION. I'M CURRENTLY AT THE EARLY STAGES OF BEING THE NON-RESIDENT FATHER, AND FINDING THE GRIEVING PROCESS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO COPE WITH.

MY NOW ESTRANGED WIFE HAS TAKEN MY 5-YEAR-OLD AND 14MTH OLD SONS FROM ME, AND THERE HOME GIVING ME A A4 PAPER WITH MY ACCESS RIGHTS TO MY CHILDREN AND ASSET ALLOCATION. THE SEQ OF EVENTS BELOW ARE MY GRIEVANCES WHICH I'M PRAYING THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT THAT I ELECTED LAST YEAR WILL LISTEN TO ITS CONSTITUENTS AND PROVIDE A EQUALLY FAIR GO FOR ME AND THE FATHERS THAT DO CARE AND CRAVE FOR JUSTICE OF EQUAL RIGHTS FOR;

- **50-50 PARENTING SHARING, TO SUPPORT WORKING PARENTS.**
- **REALISTIC AND FAIR ASSET ALLOCATION TO SUPPORT BOTH PARTIES IN RE-BUILDING THERE LIVES FOR THE CHILDREN.**
- **EQUAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR BOTH PARENTS THROUGH THE C.S.A WHEN ASSESSING CHILD SUPPORT MAINTENANCE.**
- **UN-BAIS DECISIONS BY COURTS AND SUPPORT AGENCIES.**
- **AN INQUIRE INTO THE INSENSTIVE TACTICS OF SOLICITORS.**

MY WIFE ANNOUNCED OUR SEPARTION ON THE [REDACTED], 2 MTHS AFTER THE LOSS OF MY FATHER TO CANCER, I WAS STILL GRIEVING THE LOSS WITH MY FAMILY WHEN MY WIFE ANNOUNCED OUR SEPARTION. MY FIRST REACTION WAS I'M LOSING MY CHILDREN, THEN A FEAR OF WHAT NEXT. MY ESTRANGED WIFE ADVISED ME TO SEE A SOLICITOR. I TRIED TO DISCUSS WORKING THROUGH THIS SEPARATION OURSELVES AMACIALLY, BUT WAS TO LATE FINDING OUT THAT SHE HAD ALREADY PLANNED THE SEPARATION AROUND THE TIME MY FATHER HAD PAST AWAY, TO MAKE THINGS MORE FRIGHTENING, MY ESTRANGED WIFE HAD RECEIVED ADVISE FROM 1 SOLICITOR TO CALL THE POLICE AND REMOVE ME FROM MY HOME THROUGH THE AVO PROCESS, EVEN THOUGH I HAVE NEVER HALMED MY FAMILY EVER. THAT SCARED ME TO THINK WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS AND LUCKLY MY ESTRANGED WIFE WALKED OUT ON HIM, AND SEEN ANOTHER SOLICITOR.

I LOOKED INTO WHAT SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS COULD HELP ME THROUGH THIS GREIVING TIME, AND FOUND AN ORGANISATION NAMED DADS AUSTRALIA. I DID TRY NUMEROUS TIMES OVER A WEEK TO CONTACT MENS LINE AUSTRALIA FROM THE WHITE PAGES WITHOUT LUCK. AFTER DISCUSSING MY SITUATION WITH DADS AUSTRALIA, I HAD ORGANISED A MEDIATION SESSION WITH UNIFAM COUNSELLERS AT THE [REDACTED] OFFICE ON THE [REDACTED] IN HOPE THAT UNIFAM CAN HELP FACILITATE OUR SEPARATION IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF BOTH PARENTS AND OUR CHILDREN.

AFTER DISCUSSING MY SITUATION WITH THE UNIFAM COUNSELLER, SHE ADVISED ME ON THE [REDACTED] THAT SHE HAD CONTACTED MY ESTRANGED WIFE AND FELT THAT MEDIATION WAS ACHIEVABLE AND THAT THE CONVERSTAION WAS PLEASANT. ON MON THE [REDACTED] UNIFAM COUNSELLER ADVISED ME THAT OUR SEPARATION WAS MEDIATABLE BETWEEN BOTH PARTIES, WHICH GAVE ME HOPE OF A POSITIVE OUTCOME CONSIDERING MY SITUATION. MY ESTRANGED WIFE HAD SEEN THE SAME COUNSELLER AS I DID ON MONDAY [REDACTED]

AT THIS STAGE WE WERE STILL LIVING IN THE SAME HOUSE WITH THE CHILDREN. MY ESTRANGED WIFE THEN TOLD ME THAT FURTHER MEDIATION WITH UNIFAM WASN'T GOING AHEAD AND THAT THE COUNSELLER ADVISED MY ESTRANGED WIFE AT THAT SESSION THEY HAD ON THE [REDACTED] THAT MEDIATION WOULDN'T WORK. I WAS SHATTERED BECAUSE THE FACT THAT MY HOPES WERE UP AND I KNEW NOW THAT THE SOLICITORS AND COURTS WERE GOING TO DETIRMINE MY FUTURE WITH MY CHILDREN AND ASSETS.

I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM UNIFAM ON THE [REDACTED] STATING THAT WE FEEL MEDIATION IS NOT APPROPRIATE AT THIS POINT IN TIME, THAT DECISION ALONG WITH MY WIFE'S DISCUSSION WITH UNIFAM COUNSELLER FORCED BOTH PARTIES INTO THE COURTS I BELIEVE UNNECESSARILY.

I FEEL THAT I HAVE ABSOULATELY NO RIGHTS AND HAVE BEEN PLACED WITH UNFAMILAR RESTRICTIONS ON MY FUTURE RELATIONSHIP WITH MY CHILDREN KNOW THAT MY ESTRANGED WIFE HAS DETIRMED THAT THE COURTS WILL DECIDE THE OUTCOME OF OUR SEPARATION.

MY WIFE HAS SUBMITTED A LIST OF DEMANDS THROUGH HER SOLICITOR, STATING THAT I CAN'T SEE MY 15MTH OLD SON OVER NIGHTS UNTIL HIS 3YRS OF AGE, AND HAVE HIM STAY WITH ME DURING SCHOOL HOLIDAYS UNTIL HIS 5 YRS OF AGE. THIS IS PLACING A STRAIN ON OUR FATHER/SON RELATIONSHIP AT AN EARLY STAGE. MY YOUNGEST SON IS BOTTLE FED AND I HAVE NUTURED HIM AS HAS MY WIFE AND CAN RAISE AND CARE WITH AS MUCH LOVE AND RESPONSIBILITY AS MY ESTRANGED WIFE, WHICH IS SUPPORTED BY A CHILDRENS PSYCOLIGIST I'VE DISCUSSED WITH. MY ELDEST SON OF 6 IS ABLE TO STAY OVER NIGHT BUT WITHOUT HIS BROTHER, I BELIEVE THAT WILL HAVE A DETREMENTAL EMOTIONAL EFFECT ON BOTH THE BROTHERS AND MY RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM, AS I HAVE ALWAYS PLAYED WITH THEM FED AND BATHED THEM TOGETHER.

I FEEL THAT MY ESTRANGED WIFE WITH THE FAMILY LAW AS IT IS TODAY IS PLACING A BIGGER GAP BETWEEN THE FATHER ROLE MODEL OF TODAY'S SEPARTED CHILDREN. I'M TOTALLY COMMITED TO MY CHILDREN AND WOULD LOVE TO SEE THEM AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, BUT THE NORMAL NON-RESIDENT RIGHTS ARE EVERY SECOND WEEKEND,

WHICH IS FAR TO LONG FOR YOUNG CHILDREN TO BOND WITH THERE FATHER, AFTER SPENDING EVERY DAY/NIGHT WITH THEM AS IN A NORMAL RELATIONSHIP AND HOME ENVIRONMENT.

AND AS I NEED TO WORK TO SUPPORT MYSELF AND SHARE IN MY CHILDRENS WELFARE, I'M RESTRICTED TO A 50/50 PARENTING ARRANGMENT, WHICH IS HURTING MY NON-RESIDENCY RIGHTS. MY ESTRANGED WIFE ISN'T WORKING AND RELIAING ON WELFARE.

I ALSO FEEL THAT AS THE SOLE PROVIDER OF OUR HOUSEHOLD FINANCIALLY, I HAVE LIMITED RIGHTS TO MY ASSETS THAT I HAVE WORK FOR OVER OUR 10-YEAR MARRIAGE. I HAVE PAID FOR 2 HOMES IN THIS TIME, AND MY ESTRANGED WIFE THROUGH HER SOLICITOR HAS ASKED FOR 60% OF ALL ASSETS AND ME 40%, INSTEAD OF A 50/50 SPLIT, WHICH I PROPOSED. THAT DEMAND FROM MY ESTRANGED WIFE GIVING ME VERY LITTLE TO RE-ESTABLISH A HOME FOR MY CHILDREN WHEN IN MY CARE, BUT PROVIDING MY ESTRANGED WIFE WITH A HOME WITHOUT MORTGAGE.

WE HAD ALWAYS PLANNED TOGETHER THAT MY WIFE WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORK DURING THE EARLY STAGES OF RAISING MY TWO CHILDREN UNTIL SCHOOL AGE. AND KNOW MY ESTRANGED WIFE IS STAING THAT SHE IS THE PRIMARY CARER OF OUR TWO CHILDREN, AND THAT'S THE WAY THE COURTS WILL A JUDICATE THEIR DECISION.

I FEEL THAT WE SHARED THAT RESPONSIBILITY TOGETHER, AS I WORKED, COME HOME AND ASSISTED IN THE CARING FOR MY TWO CHILDREN IN A EQUAL SENCE.

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HOME FOR MY CHILDREN, AND WOULD BE WITH THEM AT LEAST 98% OF TIMES, AND ALWAYS WHEN GOING OUT AS A FAMILY.

PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ MY GREVIANCE AND UNDERSTAND THE PAIN THAT AS A FATHER WHO LOVES HIS CHILDREN HAS BEEN KNOW PLACED IN THE SYSTEM, WHICH IS UN SIMPATHIC TO ME AS PROBABLY THE MAJORITY OF FATHERS IN THIS SITUATION.

WE NEED CHANGE FOR THE BEST INTEREST OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUAL RIGHTS.

OUR CHILDREN WANT IT, BUT ARE INFLUENCED AND DON'T HAVE SAY.

PLEASE REPLY WITH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THIS LETTER AND ANY DETAILS OF PROGRESS WITH THE INQUIRY IN DECEMBER 2003 IN THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT.

YOURS SINCERELY

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]