

Dear Senate Inquiry - Shared Parental Responsibility Bill 2005

This is a my submission to the Senate Inquiry into the provisions of the Family Law Amendment (Shared Parental Responsibility) Bill 2005

'Shared parenting' seen as custody solution
Bills in New York would require courts to treat mom, dad equally

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Hoping to change the overwhelming awarding of child custody to the mother in divorces cases, legislators in New York are trying to bring some equity to fathers living in the state with three bills that advocate "shared parenting."

A.330 in the New York State Assembly would guarantee "statutory presumption of joint custody" in divorce cases "so that both parents can continue to share in the responsibilities and duties of the children's upbringing."

The bill, sponsored by Democratic Assemblyman Harvey Weisenberg, states that continuing contact with both parents through "shared parenting" is in the best interests of minor children - as well as their parents.

Under the legislation, courts would be required to award joint custody unless something were brought to light to prove such an arrangement would be detrimental to the children. That fact would have to be proved by the party seeking sole custody.

"Shared parenting," the bill states, means "both parents would remain legally responsible and in control of their children so that both parents share in the care and upbringing of their children."

States the legislation: "Currently, there is no preference for shared parenting in New York. The court may award joint custody, but in practice rarely does so."

The bill stresses the fact shared parenting not only benefits the children involved but also extend family since a child would have a greater opportunity to interact with relatives on both sides.

Weisenberg's bill has been endorsed by the New York City Council and fathers' rights organization Coalition of Fathers and Families NY, Inc. A companion bill in the Senate is S.291.

Another similar bill pending in the Assembly is A.6670 by Assemblyman Brian Kolb. One of its provisions is to change state statutory language so the term "visitation" for non-prime custodial parents is substituted with "parenting time."

Said a WorldNetDaily reader who supports the New York bills: "No child should ever have to endure the nightmare of being torn from the arms of a loving parent. And when you 'allow' a child to 'visit' mom or dad four days a month, that is exactly what is happening."

Attention has also been brought to incidents where fathers have been forced to pay child support for children who are not theirs. As WorldNetDaily reported,

what has become known as paternity fraud affects as many as 30 percent of men with such obligations.

http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=48972

Thank you for reading my submission

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