

Please accept my input below for the Family Law Amendment.

Thank you,

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We all watched as Peter Gabriel sang John Lennon's "Imagine" at the recent start of the 2006 Winter Olympics. We heard the call for cease-fire... We all dream and pray for world peace. Yet the war rages on in Australia... It barely notices the Olympics...

And it appears that those in Parliament may not even be aware of the war... They are preoccupied with other matters. They may not see it for what it is... They may choose to look the other way. They believe that we can wait another year or two... We can use the changes as political chips to win another election... And the war rages on... And the casualties continue...

The victims are many; old and young alike. The war affects the adults to be certain... Male suicide numbers 5 a day in Australia... Female suicide at 2 a day... Teen suicide... lets not go there. The pain is too great. What a terrible blemish for a great country that could set the global standard for families.

Grandparents are affected. The most affected are the children. Only thing is that children hide their wounds... some for years, some for the rest of their life. Yet the wounds have a profound impact on their future and the future of Australia. Is this so difficult to see?

When the aircraft flew into the World Trade Center, many people were amazed and wondered why it happened... The reasons are complex but the active war had started over 20 years before. Terrorists had bombed western facilities for many years. Many failed to see those events as the risks they represented and governments failed to respond. And now we are paying a greater price.

A war is ongoing in our families. Money, greed and control feed the war. Families are destroyed as parents seek child support and Family Court decisions about residency and division of assets. The children aren't protected. They suffer deep wounds.

I pray that you muster the courage to resist special interest groups and initiate Child Support law changes. The Australian government had the courage to identify problems with the Child Support Scheme. A detailed analysis was done with many experts culminating in the Parkinson Report. That report provided many positive steps to stop the war. There will naturally be those groups opposed to stopping the war. Some may be in high professional positions. They benefit from the war. We generally don't view those who benefit from warfare in a positive light. This should be no different.

Implement the recommendations of the Parkinson Report now. Show the people of Australia and the world what leadership is truly about. Get the job done!

Implement equal time for children with each parent barring proven domestic violence. Equal responsibility does little for a child that wants to be loved and nurtured by both parents. Love is displayed by action. Action needs time. Time with the children. Love of a parent requires time with the children. Current Family Law rules and Court practice do not deliver sufficient time for children to be loved by each parent. The Court needs direction.

A cease-fire can be achieved with new Family Law that states "equal parenting time barring proven domestic violence". That will allow both parents to love the children. That will allow the children to gradually transition away from the

intact family's shared time and shared love. That is in the best interests of the children. To do anything else is outright discrimination without proper psychological or legal foundation.

Relationships Centres will provide little relief in the war. Education before marriage will be helpful. It will not stop the war. Three hours of divorce counselling will be a large waste of money and will not stop the war. It will resemble minor first aid on a major casualty.

The world is watching. Australia has the ability to show the world that they are serious about peace. Peace starts at home. Please do not allow the Parkinson report to be shelved to satisfy special interest groups or a Child Support Agency that complains about the burden or cost of change. Change, especially with large government organizations, is always difficult and requires a funded change management plan with proactive leaders. Show the world that Australians can get the job done.

There is a war raging. Families are divided. Children are treated like bargaining chips. Children are not seeing their parents. Grandparents are not seeing their grandchildren. Men are committing suicide at 5 per day. Women at 2 per day.

There is a war raging. It has been raging for many years. We do not need to delay the passage of the peace treaty to fill some political strategy. We need Peace now!

Show the people of Australia and the world that Australia stands for peace and that it starts at home. Implement the Parkinson Report recommendations now. Change Family law to state, "equal parenting time barring proven domestic violence".