

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

I wish to make a submission to the senate inquiry and describe some of my recent my experiences as a loving father who is being denied the care of my child under the current system and faces the prospect of having no contact with my child into the future.

I had a relationship break up with my former partner last year after she declared that she did not love me anymore. Prior to this my former partner expressed an interest to move interstate with several of her single mother friends. She continues to seek to relocate 3,000 away from me with these friends.

After the break up I represented myself in court and after being denied 5 weeks contact with my daughter by the mother of my child I was awarded 3 nights contact a fortnight with my daughter. My former partner is denying one of the nights I was awarded as I am unable to take up the contact on the exact day ordered because I do a small amount of remote work and she is being rigidly inflexible with the court orders. As my former partner was desperate to move interstate and the contact arrangements threatened her plan to do so she sought to get a restraining order against me to build a case for denying me any contact with my daughter and all of her paternal family. I opted for a without admission order in the hope that it would stop my former partner from making vicious and false allegations against both me and my family and trying to label us as child abusers with no evidence. During this time my former partner was regularly staying in women's shelters and making claims that I was abusing her despite the fact that I did not see her at all during this period and my mother was residing with me in the former family home. I and all of my family have done nothing other than try to support my former partner and we continue to do so. We live in hope that one day she will have a change of heart and allow us to have an ongoing relationship with my daughter. I am currently seeking to prevent the relocation of my former partner so that I can have an ongoing relationship with my daughter.

Were the proposed laws to be passed through government I believe that it would send a clear message that children have a right to a full and loving relationship with both their parents and that both parents have an obligation to provide this for their children. Men often face having the obligation of supporting their child through the Child Support Agency. The proposed laws would put obligations onto many women to provide a positive childhood for their children by involving the other parent in their lives.

I do not except the claim that greater father involvement in the lives of their children will be a risk to the safety of their children as having two parents means that children have the eyes and ears of two people looking after their wellbeing and ensuring that the other parent is adequately providing for the child. There must be real and tangible evidence of abuse before it can be used as an easy excuse to remove fathers from the lives of their children as has been the case in my experience. The proposed laws would enshrine the rights of children to live the best lives they can rather than half a life resulting from half the parents they deserve.

Thank you for reading my submission

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