



Chairman Hillyer, Vice Chair Grendell & Civil Justice Committee
House Civil Committee
Ohio Statehouse
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215

May 16, 2022

Re: House Bill 508 - OPPOSED

Dear Chair Hillyer, Vice Chair Grendell and Civil Justice Committee,

For over 20 years at California Protective Parents Association (CPPA), we have been working to protect children from incest and family violence through research, education and advocacy.

CPPA opposes your H. B. 508, which mandates 50/50 custody. Across our nation women and men are allowed to leave abuse, but children are not. A child's right to be safe has been shown in Joan Meier's et al., 2019 study to be overlooked in family courts across our country when abuse allegations are raised. This happens regardless of a state's language for the "best interest of the child" or the standard of "preponderance of evidence" or "clear and convincing evidence."

Many have educated this committee on how custody cases are usually decided by two healthy parents and it is the small percentage of cases with custody in question. These cases usually involve an abusive parent, one who abuses physically, sexually and/or with coercive control.

Home is the last place people like to think abuse happens, but it is the first place that needs to be safe for a child. Moving to 50/50 when the majority of contested custody cases that deal with abuse are overlooked will remove what little chance there is already for a child to be safe from abuse. It treats children as pawns in a field that needs more child protection and not a green light to abusers. 50/50 bills continue to enable abusers, who are trying to fast track their control over others, and assert their rights over the child's right to be safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Catherine Campbell'.

Catherine Campbell
Executive Director