

Rosalind Smith  
House Families and Aging Committee  
Opponent Testimony on HB 14  
March 21, 2023

Chairwoman Schmidt, Vice Chair Miller, Ranking Member Denson, and members of the House Families and Aging Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written opponent testimony on HB 14.

Hi, I am Rosalind Smith from Cincinnati, Ohio.

This bill is NOT in the best interest of every child. Many children in Hamilton County have been forced into a 50/50 arrangement that was not in their best interest. Children's lives have been disrupted for the sake of parental rights. In 2014, my son's life was disrupted because the family court system favored shared parenting. The law professionals and social workers involved in the custody investigation did not consider that my son didn't have consistent contact with his father and had no extended time with him due to his father's choices. My son has struggled for eight years because the court system said this arrangement would be best. My son worked with his counselor over the years to help him adjust to the different parenting styles and living arrangements, but that was not enough. When a child is not securely attached to a parent, the child has no sense of safety and security with the parent. The child continues to suffer when the parent ignores this fact because he has parental rights. No child should have to suffer until they are eighteen years old. The preferred parent should not be taken to court and villainized because the child refuses to return to the other parent's home. I have been accused of parental alienation because my son has refused to return to his father's house. My son is fourteen years old, and this court process we have experienced has declined to hear from him about his lived experiences. They have also not listened to his wishes and desires. If he committed a crime, they would hold him accountable for his actions and possibly try in as an adult. No child would refuse to leave a place that is safe and fun. This court system is already flawed, and this bill will make it worse for the preferred parent to protect their children and fight for their voices to be heard. Put yourself in the place of a child whose scars are internal and not physical, and you are crying out for help, and no one is willing to listen because the parent "looks" like a good person. This bill will completely silence the voices of the children. This bill will add to the damage that is already being done. Vote NO on HB 14.