

OPPOSITION TO S.B. 174

To Committee Members:

This proposed legislation is an abomination.

Let's start with the fact that the sponsors of this legislation practice in Family Law, and this proposed legislation will increase the expense to families and line the pockets of themselves and other Family Law attorneys. That's not very ethical, and such, may not be Constitutional.

I find it amazing that attorneys didn't even know that The US Constitution nor the Ohio Constitution speak of Parental Rights. Or, was it just a stunt to try to placate parents that the sponsors see as ignorant. Again, bad faith!

One of the backers of this bill are the Domestic Violence groups. As a survivor of DV, I can say that those people do more to hurt than help. As an advocate, I have been told over and over how the shelters fraudulently have women lie about violence. They turn squabbles into violence. As one who has been beaten, I find these lies to be abhorrent and demeaning to those of us who were REAL victims. Also, they do nothing to help men who are victims. As being nothing but completely biased, I question the Constitutionality of VAWA, which funds so much of the DV industry.

And all this you say is in the "best interest of the children". This proposed legislation does more to separate children from their fathers. Study after study has shown that involvement by both parents is best for children. The more involvement the better. There is no assumption of 50/50 custody which is found to be best for the children. A judge which a large caseload cannot be responsible for the decision unilaterally. With no accountability to Guardians ad Litem being through, the entire process is far from finding what is in the best interest of any child. In my 25+ years of advocacy, not one GAL that was reported for not doing a though, independent investigation has ever been disciplined. However, I have seen many cases where they are biased against one parent and do little/no fact finding on one of the parents. I have also witnessed GALs use a person's religion and political opinions against a parent that was completely fit and, actually would have been the better primary custodian.

On the fiscal front, this bill makes custody findings so complex that I don't see how it can be done without more judges and their support staff. This will increase the cost to the counties. Has anyone checked to see if the counties have room in their budgets for the increased costs?

Again, I wish to bring up the fact that this bill, if passed, would increase the cost to parents, which, in turn, would take money from the children. Savings for the future will be depleted and any generational wealth will be compromised by the legal bills. The extended time that this bill will cause is what will increase the cost. This extended time for the children to be in limbo is FAR from in their best interest.

To close, this bill is VERY anti-child and anti-family. No self respecting Republican could possibly vote in favor of this bill!

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