

**PROPONENT TESTIMONY - HB508**

**TESTIMONY OF ALEXANDER HAAS**

**Co-Founder, Stark County Parents United; Vice President, A Kids Right; Co-chair, Ohio**

**Affiliate National Parents Organization**

**330.353.2705, me@alexanderhaas.org**

**CIVIL JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

**OHIO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 134TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**MARCH 8, 2022**

Chairman Hillyer, Vice Chair Grendell, Ranking Member Galonski and members of the House Civil Justice Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony on HB508.

My name is Alexander Haas, I've been supporting victims of parental alienation and advocating for change in the Family Court system ever since my eyes were opened to it through my own experience with it in 2010. I have lived in Ohio most of my life only living in New York for University. I'm married now with 3 children with my wife and run a small business with a small chain of coffee-shops I founded in 2003. I volunteer in my community including being an active member of the Canton Planning Commission. In 2010 while I was the primary caretaker for my son of 4 and daughter of 2, they were abducted by their mother. We were not married so the police nor FBI would provide assistance. Only after I spent my savings and borrowed to get an attorney to file a series of court motions did I get to be with my son and daughter again at all. Realizing the travesty and damages routinely endured by children and parents I set out to improve things out of respect for that most sacred and fundamental bond between parent and child. I co-founded Stark County Parents United, which acts as a support group to parents alienated from their children by actions of the court or the other parent. I'm the Vice President of A Kids Right, a New York based 501c4 advocating to protect a child's right to access their parents. I'm also Co-chair of the Ohio Affiliate of the National Parents Organization. The entire ordeal of losing access to my children and having to send them away as they would cling to me crying has devastated me. Now, years later, I rarely see them and have lost their affection. But I'm a capable adult and can advocate for myself. Ohio's children cannot advocate for themselves and need to be advocated for. HB508 is a step in that advocacy to protect all of Ohio's children from losing a parent.

I have met more than a hundred parents, fathers and mothers, devastated by being relegated to being a visitor in their child's life and confused as to the why or the justification for the court ordered alienation. Most are left feeling that they and their children were abused by a system they are powerless to fight and punished if they try. Many are fearful of punishment from the court even they discuss or make the facts of their case public. The story of Ohio's Dan Brewington is a prime example of why that fear justifiably exists. In my own case, an online video was made about the courts actions in my case, the result, the Guardian ad Litem threatened to reduce or eliminate my time with my children. Of course the reason these courts don't want the public to know what they are doing is because it is shameful, legal, because the current legislation allows it, but shameful. To give you the most recent example in my own case, just last year, Judge Campbell ordered my time with my children be permanently limited to 4 hours on Wednesday and 9am – 4pm Saturdays. Why? Because "the court finds it is in the children's best interest....until father better understands raising children." (see attached order) this lack of requirements of evidence, lack of accountability, and unbridled discretion is a threat to all Ohioans. Any family court could order any parent's children away from them with the same reasoning. I will also add that the Judge also conducted a hearing regarding this before I was even served with notice of it. After asking some attorneys if that is a due process violation, the response was "probably" "but that is how it is done all the time" (see attached docket). The US Department of Justice had recognized and wrote about this and similar family court issues in the Office of Access to Justice letter dated 3/16/2016 in which they wrote "the convening made plain that unlawful and harmful practices exist in certain jurisdictions throughout the country"...."common practices run afoul of the United States Constitution"

I do agree that this bill is imperfect, the language in this bill needs adjusted to strengthen it further and give more direction to the courts. The new "detrimental" standard in HB508 would likely be implemented by the courts in a similar manner as "child's best interest". Leaving the only major substantial improvement of this bill the increased standard of evidence. There is an existing standard that is clearly defined and outlined in Ohio case law of "unfitness". HB508 should be adjusted to use the existing standard of whether a parent is fit or not. This should be simple, if you are a fit parent you are entitled to shared parenting with substantially equal time, however, if you are declared unfit, the court has discretion to order something else. Using this existing standard honed through years and years of case law gives more clarity to the court as to the intent of this legislation, which is also the will of the majority of Ohio's parents.

The most significant effect this bill may not even involve the courts. But instead, what happens before the court system is engaged. When fathers and mothers understand that, chances are, once they separate they will enjoy substantially equal parenting, they will no longer be incentivized to degrade and attack the other parent. We shouldn't blame parents for fighting and even fighting dirty when they are afraid of losing custody of their child. The system that creates that incentive by creating a winner / loser system is to blame.

I believe in honor and truth. I believe in democracy and the rule of law – enough that I volunteered to die for my country when joining the Marine corps. When thrust into the Family Court I trusted that being compassionate and honest was the best course. I was wrong, with the way the system

is, my children and I would have been better off if I had been dishonest and hostile. I hope that HB508 is passed so that in the future when parents come to me scared about losing their children I can suggest to them to simply be honest and a loving parent and the state will protect their bond with their children. I urge you to strengthen then pass this legislation to improve the clarity to Ohio's courts regarding Ohioians beliefs and wishes in preserving and protecting the bonds of our parents and children.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you again for allowing me to provide testimony on HB 508. I would be happy to answer any questions.

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS  
FAMILY COURT DIVISION  
STARK COUNTY, OHIO

ALEXANDER HAAS

CASE NO. 2010JCV00817

Plaintiff,

vs.

JUDGE: JOHN S. CAMPBELL  
SITTING BY ASSIGNMENT

[REDACTED]

Defendant.

JUDGMENT ENTRY

\*\*\*\*\*

This cause came before the court on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of January, 2021. Present for the hearing were Alexander Haas represented by Attorney Arnold Glantz, [REDACTED] represented by Attorney Raymond Bules and Guardian Ad Litem, Attorney Nikki Reed.

This cause came for hearing upon the pleadings and this joint stipulation to the Guardian Ad Litem's report.

Attorney Raymond Bules requested the court to follow the Guardian Ad Litem's report. Attorney Arnold Glantz moved to dismiss mother's complaint for failure to request a modification of father's visitation, but rather suspension and the Guardian Ad Litem did not recommend suspension of visitation.

The Court finds that father's motion is technically correct and that mother did not request a modification of visitation.

The Court further finds that the court on its own motion and in reviewing the best interest of the children that a modification is necessary to protect the children.

The Court finds that father would benefit from counseling based upon parenting teenage children and would improve his relationship with his children.

The Court finds that both parents want what is in the best interest of their children.

The Court finds that the Attorney Ray Bules' motion does fail to request a modification of visitation.

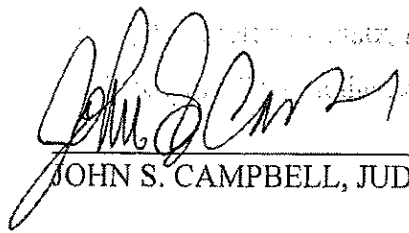
The Court is required to consider the factors in Ohio Revised Code Section 3109.151(D) as well as any other factor in the child's best interest.

After reviewing the Guardian Ad Litem's report and all of the governing factors, the court finds it is in the children's best interest that the current visitation plan shall continue, until father better understands raising children.

The Court orders father to seek individual counseling at The Relationship Center or at an appropriate counseling agency of father's choice.

The Court orders that the father's counseling focuses on parenting teenagers.

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

Attorney Bules  
Attorney Reed  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JOHN S. CAMPBELL, JUDGE

JOHN S. CAMPBELL, JUDGE

**TO THE CLERK:**

Please issue copies of the foregoing Judgment Entry to Attorney Glantz, Attorney Bules and Attorney Reed by placing a copy in their interoffice boxes on file with the Court.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JOHN S. CAMPBELL, JUDGE

TED 2/16/2021

LYNN M. TODARO  
STARK COUNTY CLERK OF COURTS  
APPEARANCE DOCKET

CASE NUMBER 2010JCV00817  
CASE TYPE CUSTODY, CHANGE OF CUST  
JUDG HON. [REDACTED]  
COURT ROOM 1  
DATE OPEN: 7/26/10  
DATE CLOSE:

6/18/20 DEFENDANT [REDACTED] - MOTION FOR EX PARTE ORDER SUSPENDING PARENTING TIME - WITH REQUEST FOR SERVICE FILED. - CASE REOPENED.  
6/18/20 DEFENDANT [REDACTED] - AFFIDAVIT FILED  
6/18/20 JUDGMENT ENTRY -- GRANTING - DEFENDANT [REDACTED] MOTION FOR EX PARTE ORDER SUSPENDING PARENTING TIME. REVIEW HEARING SET FOR 07-06-2020 AT 09:00 AM  
6/18/20 DEFENDANT [REDACTED] - UNIFORM CHILD CUSTODY AFFIDAVIT  
6/18/20 COPIES OF MOTION, AFFIDAVIT, ORDER, UNIFORM CHILD CUSTODY AFFIDAVIT ISSUED TO ALEXANDER HAAS BY STARK COUNTY SHERIFF;  
7/2/20 SERVICE COMPLETE FOR SERVICE ISSUED 06-18-2020- SHERIFF - ALEXANDER HAAS  
SERVICE TYPE: PERSONAL ON 07-02-2020  
7/7/20 PLAINTIFF ALEXANDER HAAS - MOTION FOR PARENTAL ALIENATION EVALUATION. HEARING SET FOR 07-06-2020 AT 09:00 AM - WITH PROOF OF SERVICE FILED  
7/10/20 JUDGMENT ENTRY- ATTY NIKKI REED REAPPOINTED AS GAL. PARTIES TO EACH PAY HALF OF PARENTAL ALIENATION EVALUATION. PLAINTIFF GRANTED VISITATION. PRETRIAL PHONE CONFERENCE SET FOR 08-28-2020 AT 8:30 AM, SEE ENTRY  
7/10/20 COPIES OF ORDER ISSUED TO ARNOLD GLANTZ BY INTEROFFICE BOX; RAYMOND BULES BY INTEROFFICE BOX; NIKKI REED BY INTEROFFICE BOX;  
7/31/20 GAL'S - MOTION TO RELEASE MEDICAL RECORDS WITH REQUEST FOR SERVICE  
7/31/20 JUDGMENT ENTRY - GRANTING - MOTION TO RELEASE MEDICAL RECORDS WITH REQUEST FOR SERVICE.  
7/31/20 COPIES OF MOTION, ORDER ISSUED TO DR JEFFREY SHAW BY CERTIFIED MAIL (###443082010JV00817119!!!);  
7/31/20 GAL'S - MOTION TO RELEASE RECORDS WITH REQUEST FOR SERVICE  
7/31/20 JUDGMENT ENTRY - GRANTING - MOTION TO RELEASE MEDICAL RECORDS WITH REQUEST FOR SERVICE  
7/31/20 COPIES OF MOTION, ORDER ISSUED TO DR JEFFREY SHAW BY CERTIFIED MAIL (###443082010JV00817120!!!); AULTMAN HOSPITAL BY CERTIFIED MAIL (###447102010JV00817121!!!);  
8/7/20 GAL'S EX PARTE MOTION TO EXAMINE RECORDS - WITH PROOF OF SERVICE FILED  
8/7/20 JUDGMENT ENTRY - GRANTING - GAL'S EX PARTE MOTION TO EXAMINE RECORDS WITH PROOF OF SERVICE FILED  
8/11/20 SERVICE COMPLETE FOR SERVICE ISSUED 07-31-2020 CERTIFIED MAIL TO DR JEFFREY SHAW AKRON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL 214 W BOWERY ST AKRON OH 44308 ON 08-07-2020  
8/17/20 SERVICE COMPLETE FOR SERVICE ISSUED 07-31-2020- CERTIFIED MAIL - AULTMAN HOSPITAL SIGNED BY CHRIS TRAVIS ON 08-10-2020  
8/21/20 REPORT OF GUARDIAN AT LITEM - INTERIM  
8/28/20 NOTICE OF HEARING PRETRIAL ON 10-16-2020 AT 1:30 P.M. BY PHONE CONFERENCE - WITH REQUEST FOR SERVICE FILED.  
8/28/20 COPIES OF NOTICE ISSUED TO ALEXANDER HAAS BY ORDINARY MAIL; [REDACTED] BY ORDINARY MAIL;  
9/24/20 INTERIM STATEMENT AND ACCOUNTING OF GAL FEES WITH REQUEST FOR SERVICE FILED  
9/24/20 COPIES OF STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING ISSUED TO ALEXANDER HAAS BY ORDINARY MAIL; ARNOLD GLANTZ BY ORDINARY MAIL; [REDACTED] BY ORDINARY MAIL; RAYMOND BULES BY ORDINARY MAIL;  
10/8/20 GAL'S MOTION FOR CONTINUANCE - WITH PROOF OF SERVICE FILED  
10/8/20 JUDGMENT ENTRY - GRANTING - GAL'S MOTION FOR CONTINUANCE WITH PROOF OF SERVICE FILED. NEW HEARING SET FOR 12-04-2020 AT 1:30 PM.