

Forbes, Bev (REPS)House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community AffairsSubmission No: 1633Date Received: 21-8-03

Secretary:

From: [REDACTED]**Sent:** Thursday, 21 August 2003 5:29 PM**To:** Committee, FCA (REPS)**Subject:** Inquiry Into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event of family separation

Dear Committee Secretary and
Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs

I wish to respond to the Committee's request for Submissions to the Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements. I ask that you bear with me regarding the correct protocol for the terms of reference as I am unable to download these from the Internet.

[REDACTED] from S. Ciobo's office emailed me today and advised that, although the cut-off date for submissions was 8th August, there was still time to submit.

(a) given that the best interests of the child are the paramount consideration:

The father of my child chooses not to see his daughter so to force him to have contact with her would be detrimental to my child. The last contact visit that occurred at Christmas 1999 was a very stressful time for my child and me. This is when bedwetting became a problem. We are still dealing with the psychological ramifications which manifested after this visit although my ex husband is not paying enough child support to cover even one visit to the psychologist.

During my daughter's las visit to her father in Melbourne (10 years at the time) she slept in a Tent on her own in the backyard of an inner city house in [REDACTED]. At 11.00 pm my daughter would climb the fence and walk down a main road and ring me on the public telephone. Although I gave her a phone card for her visit to Melbourne this was taken from her and she was not allowed to phone me at all during the two weeks she was there. At first she tried to ring me on the Homelink Number when she was out with her father and his defacto in a public place such as an hotel. So, I had an hysterical child ring me and yell "Mummy Mummy" and then the phone would go dead. I learned later on (when she arrived home) that the defacto, when she saw my daughter on the public phone, would come up and slam the phone down and then drag her back to the pub table by the ear.

Not to mention that my daughter was constantly reminded by the defacto and her relatives that I was a slut, a bitch and much worse. My daughter arrived home with a larger vocabulary not necessarily a richer one.

(b) whether the existing child support formula works fairly for both parents in relation to their care of, and contact with, their children.

The existing child support formula is biased towards men. In 1998 I lodged a change of assessment for child support. I was naive about what I should get but knew it was more than I was getting at that time as my ex husband had a good position as a chartered accountant and had businesses and an investment trust. In December 1998 my child support assesement doubled as my ex husband, chartered accountant advised that he just forgot to tell the child support agency about the \$50,000 he earned from one of his companies. Chartered Accountants often forget those sorts of things. However, to my knowledge he was not penalised for his breach although the CSA tell me nothing due to privacy legislation they say while other people get three years' jail for fraud.

At this time my ex husband threatened me that he would change all his affairs and that soon I would get NOTHING in child support. He said he was smarter than people working at the Child Support Agency that they were just dopes justifying their existence.

My ex husband has done just that. Every company has been transferred to his de facto who is now director. She is a former [REDACTED] truck driver who knows nothing about running an accounting company or any company. He has declared himself Bankrupt although all his companies and still up and running. Although Bankrupt, he still drives a late model car with electric windows and all the modern cons. He still maintains two Units on a golf course and because they are within his investment trust that are not within the

22/08/2003

bankruptcy constraints - he claims a mate is funding them. He enjoys full membership of the VRC and Football Clubs and owns a boat and a jetski (all in different names).

The child support agency, the attorney general's office, prime minister's office, ombudsman's office, legal aid, and the minister for community services office all advise NOTHING CAN BE DONE.

I look after a disabled child 365 days of the year on my own. I also have a disability. I would like to see the legislation changed so that CSA can pursue the defacto for the assets to obtain the child support arrears. I am tired of reading letters of response advising me that there is nothing that can be done. I am tired of hearing that my ex husband is smart. He is not smart. Intelligent and well balanced men have healthy relationships with their children he only has the one child yet he has abused this poor little soul beyond belief. I believe it is the Legislation that needs changing urgently as it is totally out of date.

I would be very grateful if you needed further input to give further evidence at any public hearings or community forums.

Yours faithfully

