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The Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs
Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry
Department of House of representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

I have joint custody or shared care custody of my three children and have had for the last 11 years and encourage more men not to give up the fight for the children they care for. I have endured more stress than imaginable, (inflicted by the legal system) and it has cost me thousands of dollars. In doing so I jeopardised my health and my job but my life rewards have been worth more than I can explain.

During this time I have seen how prejudice the whole of the legal system and the support systems of the state (ie child support) can be towards you because you are male.

Although I have a joint custody arrangement, when I was unemployed because of a retrenchment I could not be paid any support income for my children through Centre link because my Ex partner was claiming all of the benefits. I met with the staff and tried to arrange a split in the entitlements only to have them say to me 'well she is the kids mother' so my children and I made do with the dole payments only.

During my employment I had the child support system leave me with a fortnightly income of \$247 dollars and take over \$1200 dollars from my income. When I tried to explain my living situation with my children they stated that I needed to get that in writing from the Mother for confirmation (that was going to be an impossible task) I sent copies of the court document setting out the arrangement situation with my children and even with this they still stated they needed to get confirmation that this was the case from the mother. This battle went on for months.

And yes I am bitter at the system, and this is how unfair it is,

HER.

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| 32 square house on 5 acres of land | \$360,000 |
| Landcruiser | \$54,000 |
| Furniture | \$15,000 |
| Whitegoods | \$8,000 |
| Landscaping | \$12,000 |
| All of my retrenchment money | \$45,000 |

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|------------|-----------|
| Debt owing | \$145,000 |
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|---------------------------|---|
| Brought into the marriage | \$0 Still lived with her mother up to the time of marriage. |
|---------------------------|---|

Left the marriage after 2 years with \$494,000 dollars of assets and a \$145,000 dollar debt against the home

ME

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| Settlement payment | \$5,000 only. |
| Solicitor costs | \$4,350 |
| Ongoing child support | |

I got to keep my existing assets house only.

The legal system is so unfair if you are male, I have been through it twice and males lose 99% of the time and the balance of assets is greed motivated and is dependent on how much you can afford for a sharp talking lawyer, not what you have contributed to the relationship.

Custody arrangements should be,

- Custody of children should be given to the main provider of the relationship. We have created a system so people can have an excuse to become parasites on the government hand out system and this system is unfair to the person who is working full time while the other receives all the benefits without lifting a finger.
- If both parents are working like most families then the custody arrangement should be made 50/50. If in the event that this can not happen then court proceedings should follow outlining alterations to the care arrangement. In doing this it can become each of the parents responsibilities to care for clothe and meet the needs of their children whilst in there care. (Child support will not be needed to take from one parent to give to the other) This system is totally unfair to people who have been promoted because the more you earn the more you pay and the other parent doesn't have to do a thing.
- All assets acquired during the marriage **only** should be calculated and divided equally this would stop and protect the greed factor against people who have worked a life time and have their assets taken away because of legal loop holes.

One of the biggest problem associated with separation is the control factor one parent has on the other parent in relation to access to their own children. Have no doubt woman are cruel, frustrating control freaks and seem to always make arrangements or trips away on the days you are to have access to deny access and this leads to anger and other retaliation factors that are unnecessary. Eliminating this factor from the equation can only be healthy for the children's upbringing.

In all cases the parents have separated not the children and people restricting or denying access of the children to the other parent must come under some scrutiny as to their ability to be custodial parents and the courts should take a harder stand on this.

Yes men can look after their children and yes the system is unfair. I am living proof it can be done while working a full time job and being squashed into the ground by our female dominated system and I am sick of listening to garbage about how hard it is for woman. I know woman who don't work because they will loose money from their hand outs.

Our culture has been brain washed into thinking that raising a child can only be achieved by woman and because their support groups lobby government to tell them how hard it is, the majority of people believe this to be the case.

What a lot of garbage!