

5 October 2018
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Constitutional and Legal review of the new Family Law Bill 2018

Dear Senators

As one of the many hundreds of thousands of voters who have signed a petition demanding a Royal Commission, I say three cheers for Christian Porter getting rid of the thoroughly hated Family Court. About time. Finally, a politician not scared about a stare down the special interests. No wonder the lawyers are so worried.

I do very much object to this Bill in one part. It is disgusting that the peoples Parliament is even considering tinkering with the rights of Australians to self-represent when screwed by a lopsided, expensive, irrational legal system that brazenly denies one side a lawyer. We need to first see proper controls over the lawyers, not controls over the people who fund the Courts. We are not second-class citizens in our own courts. The primary voice has always been the people, the lawyers are invited guests and we want them put on a very short leash-not us . If you want to help voters don't make laws against us . Instead make legal fees much cheaper, make court forms readable, and outcomes more certain. Admit that the state has failed in one of its most core tasks - to deliver a workable legal system to sort out disputes. Dont blame us for screaming about their repeated failures.

Courts were originally for the King to sort out our disputes. We own the courts, not the judges. That's why they are called public courts. The problem is not the public speaking, it's the very small law firms who refuse to accept offers they know to be good for clients and the system, and bad for them financially. It's the judges who turn up 9 days a year trying to sort it out one at a time refusing to make precedent that would reduce court delays.

At least balance this attack on your voters please by new fair play rules for them at the same time:

- Clients paid first, and family lawyers paid last. Watch queues disappear inside 5 weeks.
- Fees are ordinarily capped at 2%, mostly. No more 40 to the husband, 60 to the wife, who pays 10 to the lawyer.
- The Law Society to publicly disclose each month the names of their family lawyers with complaints. Ban them from our courts until cleared by an independent umpire that the lawyers fund. The current wait time to investigate a family lawyer engaged in Torrens title fraud is 19 months.

Do that and show us Parliament isn't just changing the law for the mates.

Also, please enact as many similar reforms as you can pre-May 2019 when we vote.

Cheers

Paul Bates