

**Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill  
2011 [Provisions]**

I am writing to express my support for the changes to the Family Law Act proposed in the draft Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2011.

The Fairy Tale that 'Parental Alienation Syndrome' exists is rampant in the Family Court System and in Child Protection Services in this country.  
The current laws are protecting and 'aiding and abetting' perpetrators of Child Abuse.  
There is NO gender equity when over 95 percent of Child Sexual Abuse Perpetrators are men!

Often Domestic Violence goes hand in hand. Sometimes on its own.  
98 percent of relationships end harmoniously.  
The other 2 percent end up in the Family Court System.  
Highly likely then the Family Court will have an extremely high level of Child Abuse and Family Violence issues in that 2 percent.  
Yet the current Family Law Act is, I believe, more focused on the **best interests of the father**, rather than the proposed "best interests of the child/ren".  
**Children and their safety MUST come first.**

It is too late for the many thousands of children who are being/ have been 'Legally' handed over to perpetrators of child abuse.  
and the 'Big Stick' is waved at those who dare complain with threats of 'Jail' .  
We are supposed to be a Democratic country.

Instead the Australian Family Court - a Law unto Themselves. Qualifications in Child Welfare a rarity. Like a bunch of 'Carpenters flying a jumbo jet full of people'

I Support-

- \* Prioritising family violence when considering what is in the best interests of the child
- \* Removing the friendly parent provision
- \* Taking children's rights into account – a child has the right to live and be cared for in a safe environment free from Sexual , Physical, Drug and Alcohol abuse, yet they will not be granted this right until AFTER they are severely physically harmed while being in the unsafe environment.
- \* A broader definition and understanding of all kinds of Child Abuse.

Further changes that are needed

I believe that there are a number of changes needed immediately that have not been addressed in the Bill.

I urge you to consider amendments to:

- \* The presumption of equal shared parental responsibility.
- \* The concept of equal shared parental responsibility.
- \* The link between equal shared parental responsibility and equal time/substantial and significant time arrangements.

The current 'Equal Shared Parental Responsibility', that has become in practice 'Equal Shared Time' is damaging to Children.  
Even in non violent situations, Children live out of a 'Suitcase'.

They have 'no fixed place of abode'. This is highly stressful for any adult let alone a developing child.

At worst they may be subjected to severe abuse/ death, with no one to turn to to save them.

In conclusion, I urge the Federal Government to act now in response to the evidence-based research the Federal Government commissioned in the past 24 months and the promises the Government has made to address the serious problem of Family Violence in the Family Law System.

I strongly recommend the

Federal Government pass this Bill expeditiously with my suggested amendments.

I thank you for considering my submission.

Sincerely

Judith Lello,

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