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Secretary

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**Submission to Standing Committee on Family and Community
Affairs Inquiry into Child Custody Arrangements in the Event
of Family Separation. Australian Federal Parliament.**

**I am a teacher and a divorced father of six children. I wish to make the following
submission to the Inquiry.**

**Men have an important role to play in families and the current implementation of
the family law and the tax system is strongly biased in
favor of women.**

**There are many stories of men who have worked hard to provide a home
for their families and face a situation where their wives pull the plug on the
marriage. Most divorces are initiated by women. The result is the women usually
get custody of the children, the family home, the extra welfare and support
payments from the father. Then they often move in a new partner into the family
home and restrict the real children's father and his family involvement with the
children to nothing. Society also picks up the welfare cost (social and financial) of
the women's choice to dissolve the marriage.**

**The ex-husband and father loses everything and further is financially
burdened to a degree that they have difficulty starting a new life. They cannot
access their superannuation so they are effectively asset poor
and yet they are expected to give high levels of support payments to
the wife who pulled the plug on the marriage.**

Government policy changes to overcome this situation should include:

- 1. Giving birth fathers a greater say and involvement in the children's lives
by amending the family law act and giving the Court greater resources
to administer the changes.**
- 2. Providing tax deductibility to fathers for child support payments
as they currently face a hidden marginal tax rate of over 80%.**
- 3. Reducing child support payments to mothers who refuse to allow fathers
a full involvement and contact with their children.**

- 4. Allowing fathers early access to superannuation so they can purchase another house for their children to live in if they wish.**
- 5. Make new male partners financially responsible for the step children.**
- 6. Establishment of a Federal Government agency to manage childrens' family law matters, including child residency and contact. With powers to investigate and enforce contact and residency in difficult cases where parents cannot work cooperatively in the best interests of the children.**
- 7. Government acceptance of the fact that when a child is denied a relationship with a parent by another parent, that this is a serious form of child abuse.**
- 8. A full review of the family law Act, tax and other Acts, to ensure that there are not winners and losers after divorce. Too often fathers or non custodial parents suffer serious financial and social loss due to the unfairness of the current system.**

The above approaches may also help to slow down the massive rate of divorce where children are involved. It also will help to overcome the current massive bias against fathers after divorce. This will also benefit children as they will have greater involvement with their natural father.

The Government needs to realise that it represents fathers too in developing its family policies.

Yours sincerely,

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