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Wednesday, 6 August 2003 11:33 PM  
Committee, FCA (REPS)  
CHILD SUPPORT INQUIRY

7 AUG 2003

Ms Beverley Forbes  
Committee Secretary  
Inquiry Into Child Custody Arrangements (Separation)  
Standing Committee On Family And Community Affairs  
House Of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra  
SUBMISSION

I wish to make my feelings known about the out dated and unfair system that the Government uses to penalise non custodial parents through its Child Support Agency. My life and certainly my lifestyle has been governed by this department for the last nine years, placing severe financial burdens on myself and my new family to the point were I considered resigning from my job because by the time tax (49%) and child support payments (32%) were deducted from my wages I was left with this meagre amount to pay a mortgage, expenses and survive, NOT LIVE BUT SURVIVE! Whilst I was surviving my ex wife lived a life of luxury ,thanks to all the hand outs from the government, working and one third of my income going to her tax free thanks to the CSA, it was so nice of them to let me work rotating shifts 7 days a week and pay the tax on it and then give it away. There is no way of tracking this money and who knows if it is even put towards the raising of our children, I have no problems paying for my children but the calculation used to arrive at the required monthly payment is just ridiculous. My ex wife was receiving about twice as much income as me for working approx.. a third of the time, how is this a fair and just system? I have been marched of to the CSA Review board on 4 occasions to be treated like an idiot and criminal, the people that you had to deal with had as much compassion as a fridge, but at least the fridge would sit there and listen to what you had to say and be unbiased. Since separation I have had no contact with 2 of my children and I see my son every second weekend and some of the school holidays, I now have a new family and my son is very much a part of this but the other two children still do not contact me. I am currently paying \$80 per week to one of the children to assist her with University studies but this only came about by being marched up to the local Court House thanks to my ex wife and the Family court rules, I have paid maintenance for this child for last 9 years and now I am still paying, she works, gets Austudy and money from me and she wont even talk to me, thanks to my ex wife and family law. My new family is made to struggle thanks to the outdated system used by the government for CSA payments. I am unable to do any overtime to assist in our lives due to the fact that the Government will penalise me and increase my CSA payments while trying to make an acceptable lifestyle for my new family, why isn't overtime exempt from calculations that way people would be able to make their life a little bit more comfortable. Why second families treated like second class citizens is beyond me, I have been in a defacto relationship for the last 7 years and have 2 daughters from this relationship who are taken into account when doing the calculation for CSA payments but my partner is not, only for 3 months after the birth of a child is she taken into account, we are not recognised as a couple by the CSA, which is associated with the Taxation Department yet under the Ceterlink, also associated with Taxation department, rules we are recognised as a couple, so one department wont give you a reduction in payments ( CSA) because you are not a couple, while the other department give you a reduction in any payments that you may be entitled to because they say you are a couple. How any paying fathers with second families are suppose to survive while paying ridiculous amounts of child support is just up to their sheer guts and determination to survive as the Family Law Act does nothing but penalise them in many and varied ways. The whole system needs overhauling from top to bottom, both parties should be responsible for children financially not just one, which is the case at present. A more realistic approach should be taken

where any overtime is not taken into account for CSA payments and the CSA calculation is done on the paying parents income after tax, not before tax. A system like this would be much fairer than the current system and may help a lot of people with their lives rather than taking their life, which happens a lot of the time thanks to the financial burden place on payee's by the current system and government.

YOURS  
