

HELLO. MY NAME IS LORRI CAVALIERE AND I AM HERE TO SUPPORT BILLS 1155, 6688 AND 6685 ON SHARED CUSTODY. I BELIEVE TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE FOR REFORM DUE TO THE MINDS AND LIVES OF CHILDREN INVOLVED BEING AT STAKE.

I RECENTLY ATTENDED SEVERAL COURT "HEARINGS" TO SUPPORT MY FRIEND JERRY MASTRANGELO AND HIS LONG FIGHT FOR THE COURT-ORDERED RIGHT TO SEE HIS CHILDREN. JERRY HAD A WONDERFUL LOVING RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS THREE TRIPLET CHILDREN UP TO AND AFTER HIS DIVORCE. AS PART OF HIS DIVORCE, IT WAS STIPULATED THAT BOTH PARENTS SHARE CUSTODY AND A SCHEDULE WAS PUT IN PLACE, IN WRITING. SOON AFTER, HIS EX-WIFE BEGAN MAKING EXCUSES FOR THE CHILDREN, MAKING IT DIFFICULT FOR JERRY TO SHARE THE PARENTING. SHE SAID THAT THE CHILDREN DIDN'T WANT TO BE WITH HIM AND SOON THEY WERE SHUNNING HIM AS IF HE WERE A STRANGER. WHAT HIS EX-WIFE ACTUALLY SUCCEEDED IN DOING WAS MAKING A MOCKERY OF THE FAMILY COURT SYSTEM.

IT WAS SHOWN IN TESTIMONY FROM MEDICAL EXPERT WITNESSES THAT HIS EX-WIFE WAS NOT INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING COURT ORDERS REGARDING REUNIFICATION THERAPY. IT WAS SHOWN THAT WHILE HIS EX-WIFE COULD INSIST THAT HER CHILDREN PERFORM SIMPLE TASKS SUCH AS BATHING AND BRUSHING THEIR TEETH, SHE COULD/WOULD NOT INSIST THAT THEY SEE THEIR FATHER. THE CHILDREN RESORTED TO DEMEANING THEIR FATHER ON THE PHONE AND CALLING HIM NAMES SUCH AS 'JERK', 'IDIOT' AND 'STUPID' WITH NO ADMONISHMENT FROM THEIR MOTHER.

THE GAL AND THE AMC INVOLVED CERTAINLY DID NOT HAVE THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILDREN IN MIND. THEIR ONLY CONCERN VOICED WAS THAT THEIR BILLS WERE NOT BEING PAID IN A TIMELY MANNER. THERE WAS NO EXPLANATION FOR ALL THE LOST NOTES OF MEETINGS WITH THE CHILDREN, (NOR A DEMAND FOR ONE FROM THE JUDGE) EXCEPT FOR ONE ONE-HOUR SESSION, DESPITE THIS BEING A PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GAL.

IN THE END, THE FAMILY COURT SYSTEM LOST SIGHT OF THEIR CHARGE. WHENEVER POSSIBLE, CHILDREN SHOULD BE GIVEN THE BENEFIT OF THE LOVE AND NURTURING OF BOTH PARENTS. IF THE COURTS DO NOT CARE ENOUGH TO HOLD A PARENT RESPONSIBLE FOR NOT FOLLOWING A WRITTEN, SIGNED CUSTODY AGREEMENT, WHY EVEN BOTHER? I SINCERELY BELIEVE THE CHILDREN WERE SECRETLY HOPING THAT THE COURT WOULD "FORCE" THEM TO REESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR DAD. IF IT HAPPENED THAT WAY, THEIR MOTHER COULDN'T BE ANGRY WITH *THEM*, AND THEY COULD LET GO OF THE GUILT THEIR MOTHER WAS FORCING THEM TO BEAR.

AT THE END OF JERRY'S COURT HEARING, IT WAS CLEAR THE WHOLE THING WAS A SAD FARCE. THE ONLY WINNERS IN THE END WERE THE ATTORNEYS AND THE GAL WHO LEFT WITH MUCH RICHER POCKETS AS WELL AS AN EX-WIFE WHO LAUGHED AT THE SYSTEM AND HER DEFIANCE OF IT.

AFTER SPENDING HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS, AN IMMEASURABLE AMOUNT OF TIME AND EFFORT TO RECLAIM HIS RIGHTFUL ROLE OF FATHER TO HIS CHILDREN, JERRY, A TRULY WONDERFUL AND LOVING FATHER, LEFT A

BEATEN MAN. EVEN HIS OWN ATTORNEY CONVINCED HIM TO WALK AWAY – LETTING HIM BELIEVE THAT BY DRAGGING THE CASE ON, IT WOULD ONLY COST HIM MORE MONEY AND IN THE END HE WOULD MOST ASSUREDLY LOSE HIS CASE.

THE LOSERS WERE HIS CHILDREN, AND THE FRIENDS OF THE CHILDREN WHO WERE CLOSELY WATCHING. THEY TOOK WITH THEM A SCARY LESSON --- THAT IT IS OKAY TO THUMB YOUR NOSE AT THE SYSTEM BECAUSE THE SYSTEM REALLY DOESN'T CARE. YES, THERE NEEDS TO BE MORE EDUCATION FOR THOSE ENTRUSTED WITH THE WELL-BEING OF THE CHILDREN BUT THERE ALSO NEEDS TO BE OVERSIGHT AND CHECKS AND BALANCES OF THE COURTS THEMSELVES. BILL 6685 SUPPORTS THE OVERSIGHT AND PENALTIES FOR ANY PARENT DEFYING A COURT ORDER OR MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS. I URGE YOU TO SUPPORT THIS BILL. IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO FOR ALL OUR CHILDREN.