

DIVORCE INDUSTRY ATTACKS ON PARENTS AND CITIZENS

IS THERE REALLY "NO PROBLEM" IN OUR FAMILY COURTS?

A LOOK AT THE FACTS AND STATISTICS

The divorce industry in this state has unfortunately opted not to work with parents, citizens and taxpayers to try and reform our state's broken family court system, but to target us instead. This serves to respond to and address the misinformation and propaganda that there "no problem" in our family courts and that all of this is solely about a "small number of disgruntled litigants" it is not.

The attached reflects the number of cases the family court system receives by type. So last year, the family court system received 34,000 new cases. But you'll note, the vast majority of these cases are procedural in nature. They involve either a simple one-time filing at the Clerk's office, or a single hearing lasting less than an hour. They don't require much court time at all.

For example - 14,000 of those cases were parents who just filed for divorce and walked out the door. Most of them probably didn't even have attorneys at all. These are not the problem.

The problem is in the 3,400 custody cases. These are the ones that take 90% of the court systems' time and resources to resolve. These are the ones that have private pay GALs assigned, and where the financial incentive is to purposely prolong cases. Parents caught in this category - are being taken advantage of and devastated. This is where all of the family law attorneys make their money.

So when the divorce industry claims that "90-95% of cases are resolved quickly" and only a "small number" of cases are "high conflict" and it's all the parent's fault - this is not simply true. 90-95% of all cases, of any type, that come before the court are resolved quickly - because they are simple and procedural in nature.

But the majority of the 3,400 custody cases, have very serious issues and problems. This is where the problem is.

Chief State Justice Rogers mentioned in her Hartford Courant article that over the past two years, over 11,557 cases were returned to the family court system. That's huge considering that the vast majority of these cases are the 3,400 or so custody cases - not the ones that require simply filings. Imagine if this volume of business disputes were returned to the civil courts.

This does not reflect a problem with a "small number of high conflict cases" - this reflects a serious problem with the orders the court is issuing in custody cases - causing parents to have

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to come back to court over and over and over again. I'm two years in just to address the complaint I filed in March of 2012 - with no end in sight. And all of the money is gone, and the attorneys are leaving because neither I nor my ex can afford to pay them anymore, again. I'm about to join the 85% of parents who are Pro Se.

All of the complaints from parents - are from these 3,400 custody cases, not the whole universe of family court cases. And when 700 parents have the courage to sign a petition asking for GAL reform, that's a pretty powerful sign of the issue and problem.

This is why the Task Force Chairs didn't want to get any hard facts and figures to reflect the above reality. The excuse was that the Judiciary "does not have the data available." Yes they do - they just didn't want to share it. (And we have recently acquired it.)

It may have been noticed during a recent NPR Radio interview that a noted Attorney-GAL became very quiet when it mentioned that GALs in Florida are all unpaid parent volunteers from all walks of life and that Florida doesn't have the same problem we do with 85% of parents being Pro Se and not being able to afford attorneys (or the same kinds of GAL issues - because that state also has oversight.)

This is because the Attorney-GAL and spokesperson for the divorce industry is from Florida and is licensed to practice there. He knows this and how much better the GAL system in Florida is.

FAMILY CASES ADDED BY CASE TYPE FOR THE YEARS 1994-95 TO 2011-12

FAMILY	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	00-01	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11*	11-12
DISSOLUTION	14,036	13,340	13,506	13,409	13,624	14,451	13,858	14,280	13,841	13,665	13,654	13,895	13,859	13,621	13,758	14,533	14,061	13,986
LEGAL SEPARATION	268	243	267	261	275	301	276	284	277	236	253	205	217	256	236	258	221	241
ANNULMENT	33	46	63	76	47	61	56	51	56	56	62	84	56	59	68	90	78	79
CHANGE OF NAME	40	70	63	86	103	86	85	58	78	63	31	45	53	45	30	26	30	34
CUSTODY	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	1,710	1,864	1,976	2,188	2,138	2,322	2,605	2,912	3,115	3,399	3,532
DISSOLUTION-CIVIL UNIONS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	32	46	50	54	48	34
RELIEF FROM PHYS. ABUSE	5,450	5,289	5,256	5,328	5,502	5,538	6,002	5,981	6,694	7,374	7,811	8,475	8,479	8,145	8,514	9,211	9,219	8,933
FOREIGN JUDGMENTS	162	126	158	142	150	160	146	153	156	152	153	139	149	132	154	149	132	146
VISITATION	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	427	449	423	423	379	360	395	425	502	632	604
UNIFORM CHILD CUST JURIS	26	17	23	35	41	41	56	22	21	10	27	17	26	29	32	25	31	42
PAT ACK WITH SUP AGREEMENT	4,605	3,996	4,512	4,618	9,681	1,657	271	270	204	127	142	10	41	48	39	27	18	22
PATERNITY PETITION	4,022	4,777	4,939	4,001	4,130	2,719	2,328	2,006	1,970	1,618	1,783	1,629	1,754	1,713	1,591	1,522	1,720	1,585
SUPPORT PETITION	1,872	1,739	1,950	1,797	2,082	3,529	4,445	4,955	4,844	4,424	5,008	5,083	5,285	5,488	5,241	5,070	5,205	4,713
AGREEMENT TO SUPPORT	301	202	181	156	140	208	210	170	130	125	129	128	136	123	140	76	58	42
ALL OTHER	799	958	1,070	1,327	1,606	1,809	2,004	241	159	147	220	138	102	105	78	72	74	68
TOTAL FAMILY	31,614	30,803	31,988	31,236	37,381	30,560	29,812	30,608	30,743	30,396	31,884	32,377	32,871	32,810	33,268	34,730	34,926	34,061

* Restated to reflect a new methodology for capturing family statistics ("Total Family" added changed from 34,927 to 34,926)