

Bill 494 – PH 3-31-14

From: Fiana Alloura

Sent: Saturday, March 29, 2014 3:30 PM

To: Sen. Witkos, Kevin; Rep. Cook, Michelle; Jud Testimony; Blanchard, Deborah

Subject: March 31 Public Hearing is so important.

I'm so sad about the email Attorney Dornfeld sent out to the masses because it's not a fair representation of what is really happening. And to think she sat on a task force of public interest! She obviously doesn't know what it's like to be a family that grieves a living relative at a holiday function because it's been 5 years since you had contact with a parent or child, brother, sister, son, daughter, cousin, mom, or dad, grand parent aunt uncle. What ever happened to empathy?

Even after all that our family has been through like many others we are not angry or disgruntled. We are sad and left wanting more of a relationship with a missing link. Left wanting help and enforcement. I mean we are so very lucky to have two amazing happy healthy loving young boys. But they want to see their big brother so bad. Our boys are in public school, daycare, scouts, football, faith formation, soccer, t-ball, I work as a professional in the community my husband for a blue chip large cap company... We are not bad, unfit, or angry parents. If we were I'm pretty sure one of the many mandated reporters the boys are around daily would have reported something long ago... But no, instead, we have great relationships with all their leaders and many of their friends parents... We are great parents just missing one child for some quality family time. Holidays, weekends, vacations, dinners, overnights, sleepovers we get none of that.... The boys only get to see their brother 1x per month every time he goes home his mom has him send an email or call the GAL to tell him how miserable the visit was and that he doesn't want to to do them. When while he is with us there was tons of laughter, fun, and happiness. Photos, videos, friends and family all are witness to this. So if we are good enough to parent our two children how come my stepson can not spend every other weekend, alternating holidays, one night a week, 2 weeks vacation with us? Why can't we speak to him on the phone, call him on his birthday, mail him a Christmas card, watch him in a parade, or cheer him on at a game? Is that really asking for too much? By asking for that are we high conflict? 5 years in court double digit costs just for visitation time. Is that efficient? Fair? In the best interest of the child(ren)?

Conflict is a funny thing it only takes 1 person in a grouping to cause it. In the case of family court when this happens both parties get labeled as "high conflict" which is not a good thing to be labeled these days. When that's simply not always the case (sometimes it may be but not always) there are times the other party gets stuck on the ride defending themselves and protecting. When the person causing the conflict starts crossing the line to being abusive the other party has no choice but to stand up for themselves but this does not mean they are "high conflict" or causing conflict. It's important to look for the pattern to get to the root of the problem. Instead of labeling both parties why not figure it out come up with a solution and enforce that solution? Use fines payable to the state anything honestly but show the misbehaving party the behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Otherwise one can argue the overseer (Judge, GAL, AMC, evaluator, therapist, coordinator, supervisor) is causing

the high conflict situation, perpetuating it, or enabling it. So instead of blaming the parents and people who want reform let's reach across party lines and fix the problem together. The ones who are suffering angry and disgruntled are the children especially as they mature into adults!

Agreements take all parties acceptance approval and follow through to work. Just because one parent is uncooperative and the other wants help to get cooperation doesn't mean they are "high conflict" "angry" or "disgruntled."

I believe Ann Stevenson's article today in the Connecticut Law Tribune is a very well thought out piece that should be explored further.

<http://m.ctlawtribune.com/module/alm/app/ct.do#!/article/1533164729>

The GAL attorneys against these changes appear to be acting exactly like the people they are writing very negative communication about. Aren't these GAL attorneys supposed to be pros at making agreements? Isn't that what they and Chase Rogers are trying to portray? The system is fine they all do a great and wonderful job helping the majority of families reach agreements? Is this how they treat them to get these agreements? They bully them or guilt them into them? I see why after the agreement is reached so many post judgement motions are filed. I don't know about you but her email left me wanting to see better professionalism and thinking maybe the parents are right. Maybe the players in the family court system do cause the conflict and make workable agreements a challenge. I mean financial gain for prolonging cases isn't such a far reaching concept for people with no oversight and accountability. All GALs and other court appointed professionals should be 1099'd by parents and the state and the fed should be making sure the GALs and other family court appointed professionals are properly reporting their income for tax purposes. I bet a railroad from Waterbury to Hartford could probably be built with the income tax dollars they aren't accurately reporting and that would be a better budget fix for the economy and employment markets then anything else I've heard this session.

I don't want to see the system destroyed. I'd like to see transparency, enforcement, oversight, efficiency, feasibility and accountability. Why not actually use and enforce the rules in place? The system needs to be fixed to be helpful and not destructive to families. It does not need to be destroyed.

Sincerely,
Fiana