

March 11, 2015

Re: HB 5505

Dear Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, and Honorable and Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am member of the public who has had experience with the current family court system over the last 10 years. The cost of this system has not only been monetary, which has a running tally of over \$200K, but like others who have had encounters with the family court system, it has cost me both professionally and emotionally. This destabilization of parents is not in the best interest of children or the State of Connecticut. What the family court system has done to members of the public in the State of Connecticut can best be described as an atrocity.

The family bar calls the public citizens “disgruntled litigants” and tries to persuade you to despise and hate those that they oppress and burden. However, this is propaganda at its best, and if you saw what members of the public saw, heard what they heard, and felt what they felt, you would understand why they continue to call out.

The injustices the parties in family court have faced go to one of their most precious rights at the most inner core of their humanity and personhood. That is, their God given right of a fit parent to raise and parent their child. Most all parents testifying before you today would say that this right is more precious to them than liberty itself. In many cases, the family court system has limited or taken their rights away without cause by relying on psychiatrists, psychologists, and GAL’s that they never needed, never wanted, and could not afford who increase conflict between parties.

You will hear today that these injustices have happened to many people, but an injustice only needs to happen to one parent for each member of the committee to sit up and take notice, because in the words of Martin Luther King Jr. “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

I urge you to support HB 5505 as it a start to reform and redress a wrong of the steady erosion of parental rights in the State of Connecticut over the course of many years. HB 5505 protects parental rights by prohibiting a fit parent from being placed on supervised visitation which in essence precludes contact between a parent and a child without cause. HB 5505 also dismantles the unfair trade practices of Guardian Ad Litem and their referral base of psychologists/psychiatrists that work to enrich themselves by creating conflict and economically destabilizing parents, and that work injustice.

Family courts need to start serving families instead of profiting off of them, and stop spreading propaganda like “disgruntled litigants.” Family courts need to start putting into place diversionary programs instead of utilizing custody evaluations that push parent into custody battles to clear their dockets and that hurt children.

HB 5505 also alleviates economic hardships imposed by family courts by requiring psychologists and psychiatrists to take insurance, allows a party to chose their own provider

instead of one in the family court's referral base, and holds providers accountable for malpractice which is the right thing to do. A litigant should not be forced to bear personal injury at the hands of a court ordered vendor. In a recent case, Jane Doe v. Donald Hiebel, Ph.D., Keith Roeder, Ph.D. and Roeder & Polansky Family & Child Associates, the special defense raised in at least one of the answers was immunity from harm which, if effective, may prevent redress of an alleged breach of the professional standards of the psychological profession which is not something should not be sanctioned by the State. No other professionals are allowed such lax standards.

HB 5505 is just a start to much more reform that is needed. It is not genuine for anyone to honestly say that the system is not broken when we have a family court case outcomes like Joshua Komisarjevsky v. Jennifer J. Norton and Susan Skipp v. Shaun Tittle. To enlighten those that may not be familiar with these cases, just a short time before the tragic murdering the Petit family, Joshua Komisarjevsky was granted sole custody of his daughter by the family courts, and Susan Skipp a fit mother has not seen her children in years for no other reason but she raised the issue of domestic violence and a biased psychologist said so.

The laws need to be changed so that the family courts stop putting sole custody in the hands of abusers and stop allowing the abusers to use the courtroom as their last battleground to gain control over their victim by taking their child. Some people have raised the misuse of funds from the Department of Health and Human Services as being behind the ongoing problem of the re-victimizing victims of domestic violence in family courts by abusers with the psychologists and G.A.L.'s.

C.G.S. 46b-56 also is in need of revision as it allows unnecessary and unreasonable invasions into privacy of fit parents with sua sponte orders of custody evaluations without hearings, without a substantial change in circumstances, without abuse, or without neglect. The standard of review, abuse of discretion, should also be scrutinized as it allows family cases to be rubber stamped by the appellate courts without ever a hope for a parent who was unfortunate enough to lose custody to their ex-spouse or otherwise be aggrieved under the current laws. The practice of ex parte motions for custody are also very troublesome.

The statutes and rules, written by attorneys for attorneys, have been eroding parental rights in the State of Connecticut for years, and its time to amend these wrongs. HB 5505 seeks to begin to start to correct the injustices exacted upon the people who venture unknowingly within the doors of the family courts. The legislature can no longer ignore the People's outcries for relief from a troubled system.

But it is not only the judiciary that is encroaching on parental rights in the State of Connecticut. A recent proposal by the Commissioner of DCF submitted to the General Assembly on October 1, 2014 requires State mandated mental health screens and assessments of all children at school without a rational basis for doing so, requires the establishment of emergency psychiatric EMS units ready for mobilization to our schools to pick up our children, and suggests the use DCF facilities to treat those identified. SB 841 puts in place an implementation team to see that the proposal is carried out, and it is an encroachment of enormous proportion.

In closing as a member of the public concerned about the erosion of parental rights in the State of Connecticut, I would request that you support HB 5505 and oppose SB 841.

Thank you very much, and God Bless the State of Connecticut.

Very Truly Yours,

Member of the Public