

Good morning,

Please consider this my testimony in favor of HB 6927. I had provided this information to Senator Kissel back in October, 2014.

I am a woman who has been divorced twice (something I'm not proud of) and have never received, nor did I want, alimony. I found a second work-at-home job so I could support myself & my children with the assistance of child support. I am 100% completely behind a women having the right to receive rehabilitative alimony or in cases where there is a sick child that requires constant care, a more permanent type of alimony. What I am totally against is a woman having the right to 'permanent alimony' when she is working, has been working since the divorce, and has grown children.

My husband was divorced 16 years ago after 19 years of marriage. His main concern at the time of divorce was to be sure that his children were provided for. Let's let it suffice to say that every lawyer that has looked at his divorce agreement in the past 10 years has told him he had a BAD lawyer and she had a really really good one. Though it was not part of the divorce decree, he paid close to 100% of college tuition for both of his children. We didn't realize at the time that he could have gone for modification due to that fact. Even if he had, once he was done spending \$60,000 for college, she could have reinstated the alimony by taking him back to court. I don't know.....I just think that's wrong.

It is my opinion that your future life should not be predicated on the fact that you had a bad lawyer or a good lawyer. My husband was told that "your wife is going to have a nervous breakdown and that will be worse than this agreement, sign it and move on". He honestly didn't realize he was signing the rest of his life away to her as far as supporting her forever. There should be guidelines to be followed like those that have been instituted in New Jersey and Massachusetts. No one should be able to threaten nervous breakdowns, or scare someone into signing something that is not fair to both parties. Barring extenuating circumstances, no able-bodied, working woman should be able to receive lifetime alimony.

My husband was just restructured out of his job in August after 36 years at the same company. He is receiving severance pay for 6 months. We cannot even consider going to court until we have exhausted his severance pay. This severely limits our ability to save extra money to cover OUR living expenses once the severance pay ends. If he doesn't find another job within the next 6-9 months we run the risk of not being able to keep our home. Why should we have to risk losing what we have both worked so hard for because he has to continue to pay \$1100 per month in alimony for a marriage that has almost been over for as long as it lasted?? Even if he gets a modification at the end of severance, our lawyer told us that it (alimony) probably wouldn't "end", we would have to pay \$1.00 per year and when he gets a job go back to court. It just doesn't make sense to me and is very disheartening to him because he wants to take care of ME not someone he was married to years ago.

You all know, as well as we do, that the statistics are not in his favor. Chances are not good that this wonderful, hardworking 58 year old man who only holds an Associate's Degree but has 36 years' experience will find another job paying anywhere near what he was making within these 6 months. I believe for a 55-60 year old the average length of unemployment is 12-18 months at best.

All I am asking is for our elected officials to continue to discuss changing alimony laws in CT. HB 6927 is the first step in what I feel is only the beginning of change to the archaic alimony laws that currently exist in CT. I can't imagine if any one of our State Leaders were in the same situation as my husband that they would find it fair. Male or Female.

Sincerely,

Joanne Paradis

Windsor Locks CT