

March 5, 2020

Chairperson Patton and the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Kimberley Mancuso and I am the ex-spouse of Ron Holm, President of the Kansas Family Preservation Coalition. I am a US Marine Corps Veteran with a Master's Degree and strongly oppose SB157.

My ex-husband has hauled me into court 59 times for divorce/custody issues, which is emotionally and financially draining. I've also endured testifying against him in two domestic battery trials for violence I experienced at his hands while pregnant with our youngest daughter.

Every divorce/custody case is unique and should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Mandating shared parenting even in temporary orders is detrimental to the children involved especially if domestic violence has occurred. It also removes the incentive for parents to work together and devise a parenting plan that is truly best for the children.

Think about your own lives. Parenting duties are rarely split 50/50 between the mother and father. So why should a law dictate shared parenting upon divorce? Spending quality time with one's children is what's important and that doesn't necessarily equate to a specific quantity of time. Mandating shared parenting won't change the parent-child relationship or make a person a better parent. A parent has to willingly chose to be actively involved in their children's lives.

Parenting plans even temporary ones cannot be "one size fits all." The Judge

and court personnel need to make individual decisions that are in the best interest of the children.

In my case we had a court appointed guardian ad litem represent and advocate for our children's best interests. After numerous court hearings and trials with lots of testimony and an in-depth investigation by our ad litem, my ex and I along with our attorneys and other professionals negotiated a parenting plan that was in the best interest of our children and it is not a 50/50 shared parenting plan. I had sole custody of our eldest daughter with no parenting time for my ex (she is now an adult and continues to have no contact with him) and have residential custody of our three younger children (the youngest of which he denied until our judge ordered him to take a paternity test). Despite the passage of years, my ex still refuses to truly co-parent and fights me on everything relating to the children. If SB157 becomes law I fear for other families experiencing domestic violence and turmoil. SB157 could definitely make a bad situation worse and would have done so for my family.

I urge you to protect the children and vote against SB157.

Sincerely,

Kimberley Mancuso

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