

From: Robb Hanke <robb.hanke@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, September 16, 2018 10:52 AM
To: Rep.Rob.Brooks <Rep.Rob.Brooks@legis.wisconsin.gov>
Subject: Father's Rights

Dear Representative Brooks,

I am writing you this letter to express my concerns for Father Rights. I want to talk about what it means to be a father, and the lengths a father will take to be a part of their children's lives, and to financially support them.

I have 3 amazing boys. They are 8, 10 and 11. Currently I have them 36% of the time. This was changed by a Family Court Commissioner after our last hearing; prior to that I had 50/50 placement. Currently their mother receives child support and has been since 2014. The support she receives is set on an out of date standard that is no longer valid.

The support guidelines are set at a percentage of All income from All sources, and are at the Gross Monthly amount. Here is the issue at hand with that. They forget that every working person needs to pay their taxes, Social Security and Medicare, and currently it is about 28%. So just starting with that figure in mind I make about \$26.00 dollars an hour and work 45-50 hours a week, including overtime. That is just about \$4,500.00 a month. Then you take out the taxes, I bring home about \$3,400.00 dollars. I also receive \$1,100.00 dollars a month for 50% service related disability. That makes my gross about \$5,600.00 a month. Now with the current Child Support Guidelines in place, my ex-wife is entitled to 29% of all of that. Then they add in to the mix regarding how much time the children are with each parent, and it all gets confusing. Now the courts ask for a financial statement from both parties, but they never truly look at it, because the attorney for Child Support only goes by the money you make.

So let me break this all down in to a nutshell for you; 3 kids, 36% of the time, and \$5,600.00 gross a month. My take home is about \$4,500.00 a month. With the current Child Support order in place for me right now, my ex receives \$1,350.00 a month which leaves me about \$3,200.00 dollars a month. With this I am supposed to maintain a home, a vehicle, clothing, and food for my family. Even on a tight budget it still leaves me negative each month. My current wife now has to work more and that limits her time with her son, my children, and with me. Now even if I get a second job to make up the loss, that will be added to my Gross Monthly Income and I would wind up paying more child support. With the current support structure in place, my ex-wife works only 20 hours a week, receives child support, State food share, and State Medicare. Currently she makes more money a month then I do.

Child support was designed to help bridge a standard of living between two households. It has been used and abused by many to allow for personal income and hinder the father from visitation. They have made the failure to pay child support a criminal matter, but the loss or interference with visitation a civil matter.

I am not just a single case. I am a case that is heard around not only in our State, but the nation. We have heard many politicians and civic leaders talk about fathers in the children's lives. With this current system in place many father's just give up. They see there hard earned money being spend on luxury items, nails, cell phones and other things not related to the care of the children. There is a current trend of many fathers being homeless, jailed and even committing suicide over this enormous burden.

I am asking you please help us. Help the fathers be a part of their children's lives and be able to financially support them. Please help in changing child support so fathers, like me can make a difference in their children lives and be a part of it, and not always worry about how to pay the bills. Can you please see what can be done? Allow a father to have some dignity when it comes to providing for their children.

Allow the support be set at 40 hours only, military disability excluded, overtime excluded, and if needed a second job excluded.

I look forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Thank you,

Robb Hanke

From: Luke Barker <Luke.Barker@lindsay.com>
Sent: Monday, September 17, 2018 10:39 AM
To: Mautz, Kelly <Kelly.Mautz@legis.wisconsin.gov>
Subject: Wisconsin Child Support

Thank you for reading the following email.

This may seem a long winded email but I would like to convey the frustration and confusion that is built into the current Child Support system from the payers point of view.

I am a father of 6 divorced in 2015. I send my child support to ex who lives in Bayfield County, WI. My initial child support order was for 5 of my kids. In 2017, my son was 19 and out of high school. When I went to the child support office to ask about changing the order, I told them that my daughter who was 17, would be out of high school in 2018. The CS office in Bayfield County told me I wouldn't be able to apply for a change in 2017 and then again in 2018. So instead of changing in 2017 and waiting for the standard 3 year review I opted to wait until July of 2018 and have the order modified to remove my 2 oldest kids. The office in Bayfield also told me to wait to send in the paperwork until after the 18th birthday of my daughter. I sent the paperwork in July and it's been 60 days since I have heard anything. I did get an email in August and I answered the questions from my case worker. I contacted her today again and was told I never answered the questions from August. I then showed her the email and she apologized because she did not read the entire email. The email was short and to the point so I am not sure how that happened. Now that it's been 60 days and they found my email, they informed me they will "start" to gather information from my ex. They also said they have up to 6 months to process the modification.

This is a system built to put the payer into poverty. I make \$120K a year and had to live with relatives as I didn't take home enough money to live in a rental. I recently got my own place but live paycheck to paycheck.

The CS office treats the payer as the enemy. I don't feel like they want to answer my questions honestly or fully. I get multiple confusing answers to the same question. I could never afford to hire a lawyer to do this for me and that adds to the frustration.

Taking 6 months to process a child support modification seems like a legal ploy to make sure the payee has the maximum income for the maximum legal amount of time.

The CS office should have allowed me to start the paperwork 6 months before my child turned 18 and out of school.

My ex doesn't work or pay rent yet I give the maximum percent CS and she is not required to justify the amount of money she receives. I am legally bound to provide the money with no legal accountability of where the money is going or what it is used for.

I am frustrated and in holding mode. I wanted to take this opportunity while the experience is still fresh in my mind to reach out to legislative officials. Hopefully good changes can come in the future. For now the system is broken.

Again, thank you for your time.

Luke J. Barker

