

From:
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To:
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Chairperson Senator Floyd Prozanski

CC: Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson and Representative Carla C. Piluso

Re: SB-318 Relating to parenting time in family law proceedings.
Public Hearing on be held on March 6, 2019
Supplementary Testimony

My name is Elijah Goodrick and was present on March 6th to provide testimony at the public hearing regarding SP-318. First of all, I want to thank you all for taking the time to listen to our stories. For many of us, navigating the Family Court system has been a painful and difficult experience, and I do appreciate you taking the time to listen.

There is one matter that was brought up yesterday that I wanted to address. Many of the legal professionals used a statistic regarding the rate of Stipulated Agreements for the outcome of most Family Law Cases. I can only assume that their intention was to attempt to describe a non-hostile situation where most cases are resolved by agreement, and therefore they are not profiting from these situations.

However, a "Stipulated Agreement" does not mean that the parties sat down and agreed. As was most often the case in my own history, those agreements were either reached due to a Judge telling us what we were to agree to or an attorney describing that an attempt to fight would only cost an excessive amount of money for a very low likelihood of a change.

Over the course of my post-divorced life, I have had 8 separate resolutions reached due to a legal action. Of those eight, three were bench orders and the remainder (62.5%) were Stipulated Agreements. Only one of those agreements was a true agreement. Our initial divorce decree was agreed upon without any need for judges or custody evaluators, both her and I had lawyers as go-betweens and were able to reach a good agreement that was fair to all three children as well as to us as parents. Two

of the subsequent agreements were the judge upholding the essential terms of the original agreement and leaving it to us to work out the details. The most recent was the case with the biased custody evaluator, and my attorney – who has always treated me fairly and not as a source of income – told me that there was no way we were going to be able to fight the evaluators nonsense.

Again, thank you very much for your time. If you have any questions or want to discuss any of this, please feel free to reach out to me at elijahgodrick@gmail.com

--Elijah Goodrick