

I am an attorney in Oregon with over 20 years experience in domestic relations exclusively. I oppose an award of joint custody over the objection of a parent. Ideally, all parents will co-parent and exercise joint custody. The reality is that too many parents cannot agree upon the time of day, let alone whether their child should play soccer or volleyball, which is a decision reserved for the custodial parent. In the absence of agreement, the child is caught in the middle of the parents' conflict. Moreover, the court becomes overwhelmed with litigants clamoring for a judge to rule in his or her favor over every disagreement: choice of school, choice of extracurricular activities, vaccinations, haircuts, routine dental work, etc. The current policy of selecting a custodial parent in the absence of parental agreement to joint custody has served my clients, and their children, exceedingly well over the last 20 years. There are sufficient safeguards already in place to prevent one parent from shutting out the other entirely. The proposed bill should be rejected.