

Submitter: Thomas Bittner

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3095

I am a member of the Oregon State Bar. I have been practicing family law since 1990. I am a past president of the Oregon Academy of Family Law Practitioners. I am a member of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. I have represented mothers, fathers, grandparents and children in custody and parenting time litigation. I oppose this bill.

I have read the comments submitted by Judge Sean Armstrong from March 6, 2019 regarding a bill that would have done essentially what this bill is trying to do. I endorse his comments fully as they pertain to this bill as well. In my opinion, it is a terrible idea to create a presumption of any kind that equal parenting time is in the best interests of children. If the parents cannot agree on what parenting time plan is their children's best interests, then it is wise to have an impartial judge have full discretion to make that determination. Each family law case is unique, and the needs of the children vary depending on a host of factors. I see no advantage to the public or to the bench in creating a law that pre-determines that equal parenting time is best. This sounds like a short-sighted, disgruntled parent type of a bill. If there is serious traction for a bill like this, then a work group should be appointed and the matter taken under advisement for next year's legislature. Please do not adopt this bill.