

Submitter: Mindy Stannard
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Judiciary
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3095

Statement in Opposition of HB 3095

I am a family law attorney in private practice who has been practicing for over 20 years. I am a partner with Stannard Batalden Family Law in Portland, Oregon. Since 2007, my practice has focused exclusively on family law. I frequently represent children in contested custody/parenting time cases in Washington, Multnomah and Clackamas counties.

I represent a diverse set of parents when I represent a parent in family law proceedings and a diverse set of children in the cases where I have the privilege of representing children.

Children are not a financial asset, and what a parent deems as "fair" does not necessarily equate with what is best for the children in a family.

While there are some families that may have children that would do well under an equal parenting time plan, this is definitely not the case with every family. Many families going through the court system have very young children, work schedules that would make an equal parenting time difficult, parents that live far away from each other or from the children's schools, or domestic violence between the parents.

We should allow our judges to focus on what is in the best interests of the children in each family not on a presumption of equal parenting time that is not the best parenting plan for many children in our state.

I fully support and agree with the comments made by Judge Sean Armstrong that were made in 2019 in opposition of a very similar bill. I believe that if HB 3095 became law that there would be increased litigation in family law cases and that more children would be put in the middle of ongoing long term conflict within their families.