

## **Back custody reform**

For too many years, Pennsylvania's judiciary and lawyers have been running roughshod over the family courts. Judges' bias, discrimination, misinterpretation and wanton misapplication of law must be stopped.

A change in child custody laws is needed to decrease litigation, define legislatively what is best for a child, remove some unchecked discretion of common pleas judges and assure equal rights for parents and their children.

It is ironic and sad that our judicial system lacks integrity, foresight and human compassion when it comes to considering what is best for children. Abuse of judicial discretion has allowed judges to physically and emotionally rip children and entire families apart. The criterion in the best interest of the child is now what a judge or psychologist say it is. In many cases, unconstrained judges recklessly remove one parent from a child's life — 93 percent of the time fathers — without just cause and absolutely refuse to consider shared custody.

Common pleas courts must be given clear guidelines when determining custody matters. Addressing this urgent issue is a bill for Presumption of Joint Custody pending in Harrisburg. House Bill 2041 is being sponsored by 21 bipartisan representative. If enacted into law, the bill will give explicit guidance to the courts of what the best interest of the child truly means, will hold accountable those parents who refuse to build a co-parenting relationship, will reduce the psychological damage done to children and will reduce substantially the animosity and cost of family law litigation by presuming parents will share equally legal and physical custody of their children.

Tell our Legislature it's time for a child to be guaranteed the right to have unfettered access to two parents. Support HB2041 by signing the Pennsylvania Presumption of Joint Custody Petition at [www.pachildcustodyreform.com](http://www.pachildcustodyreform.com).

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