

SENATE JUDICIARY

Exhibit No. 3

Date: 2/18/15

Bill No. HB 165

Mr. ~~or Madam~~ Chairman and Committee members, I am George Glueckert and I am here with my wife to support this bill.

In February of 2012, our son Thayer joined the US Army. He was then stationed in Fort hood Texas. After being injured in training and having his first surgery he was deployed to Kuwait. Three days before his deployment, he received a fax from his wife filing for divorce. Thayer then served a year in Kuwait and returned to Fort Hood, Texas where he continues to serve our country.

Our only grandchild is now 20 months old.

Thayer was on leave and came home in October and then again for Christmas last year and these were the only two visits we have had to spend some quality time with Mason.

For the past year and a half, we have been fighting thru the court system for our lawful and moral right to have a healthy relationship with Mason.

We filed suit in Helena District Court. During court our daughter in law testified that it is important for Mason to have a relationship with me and Laura, and that for Mason's best interest, he is entitled to have a relationship with me and Laura, just the same as he is entitled to a relationship with her parents and yet she denies us any unsupervised visits. Kristin also testified that our "supervised" one hour weekly visits when they did happen were "**not in Mason's best interest**" because of the strained relationship between her and us, yet she allowed those visits to happen when she was available. She testified it is her "right" to decide when, how long, and where those visits would happen.

Mason has the right to know the paternal side of his family just as much as the right to know his maternal side. Mason has a relationship with his mother's family while his father's side of the family is virtual strangers. **What about my right to know my grandson?** His Dad is serving our country and is not here to ensure Mason gets to know Laura and me. Kristin testified it is her right to deny Mason's right to a relationship of unsupervised visits with us.

We have been thru District court in Helena with Judge Kathy Seeley presiding. Judge Seeley's decision in District Court says that Laura and I are loving and capable grandparents that live in a well kept home, but she must deny our lawsuit. She never gave any reason why. This Grandparents Law was passed in 2009. This law has never been enforced. There is no precedent in the 5 years of being law. We proved in court that it is in Mason's best interest to have a relationship with us, so I ask why do we have a Grandparents Law? While at daycare, complete strangers have the joy of babysitting our grandson and we are denied.

I believe this Ad-Litum amendment to the current Grandparents Law will help ensure the law to be followed. This will help everyone involved, especially the grandchildren.

We have now appealed to the Montana Supreme Court and still hope for a just and right decision. This has been a drain on our retirement fund and that is hurting, but nothing like the hurt, sorrow and disappointment of Mason not knowing Laura and me like he knows his maternal grandparents.

Thank you

George Glueckert