

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office

January 24, 2000 LB 120

sole custody situations. The research supports the finding of those children of joint custody rank highest in emotional and psychological health of all children of divorce. As for relitigation, it is one-half as frequent in joint custody as compared to sole custody. Only 6 percent of the joint custody returns to court; 31 percent of sole custody return. There are fewer contempt charges. Sole maternity custody produces twice as much punitive legal activity. Twenty percent of sole custody mothers file contempt citations. Only 10 percent of joint legal maternal physical custody mothers file. Joint physical custody mothers rarely file. I have a lot of other information and these...the packets, the handouts that you're getting from the pages explain how the joint custody works and how it benefits. As I said in the beginning, we talk about the family and the preservation of family a lot, but because of the no-fault divorce law, it is fairly simple to get a divorce, and when there are children involved, I think we have an obligation to try to help strengthen the relationship between the children and both parents, not isolate that child if at all possible from one or the other of the parents. So every day we legislate and administer daily at federal and state level new ways to force fathers to be involved and take responsibility for their children. We take away their licenses if there is an arrears of child support. We require paternity testing, much more than we used to. We have nonprofit organizations dedicated to helping fathers become more involved. So I don't...not sure why we rarely allow interested fathers to be equal parents. We've created a system that limits one parent from being a parent under the guise of what's in the best interest of the children, and I think most of us realize and we do feel that children need both the father and the mother in making decisions and in being together and sharing their lives so they don't, the children don't grow up feeling that they have been deprived of one parent or the other. I'll be glad to answer any questions that you might have and hope that you'll take time to look at some of the things that I've handed out. Otherwise I'd be welcome to any discussion and hope that you'll vote for LB 120.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Crosby. Senator Brashear, to open on the committee amendments to LB 120.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: Mr. President, members of the body, the