

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

January 25, 2000 LB 120

court system with regard to fathers. I think fathers, like mothers, most of them probably find their greatest joy in life in loving and in giving guidance to their children, and that doesn't change when there is a divorce. Except notice that in the divorce language itself it talks about visitation. It makes of the noncustodial parent a visitor. That noncustodial parent, in the real world that we know today, is nine times out of ten the father. And all of a sudden the one who was the father is a visitor, a word you apply to visiting distant relatives, or going to acquaintance's house, or visiting the Pyramids. It's not part of the bread and substance of your life. It is completely inappropriate description for the time spent, visitation, by the noncustodial parent and it belies an attitude, and it's that attitude that needs to change. The noncustodial parent is not a visitor; he or she is still a parent. And as long as he or she is a parent I would think that, to the practical extent under the law, they ought to be able to continue to share responsibilities. And a court that makes a visitor out of a good father makes mischief for society. And a woman who makes a visitor out of a good father is a fool and damages her own child. In both cases the child is diminished and society is diminished. And society will spend a hundredfold tomorrow for the dollar's worth of paternal guidance it didn't get today. And that child, when it approaches his or her child, will act like a visitor, a visitor, and it will go on. As the twig is bent, so the tree is inclined, and we need to change this whole attitude. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Chambers, you're recognized to speak. Yes, and this will be your third time, Senator.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. And, Mr. President, I appreciate the fact that you alerted me to the idea that it's my third time, because there are things I might would have said the next time, but I don't have a next time. But let me ask Senator Brashear a question.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Would you yield, Senator Brashear?

SENATOR BRASHEAR: Yes, Mr. President.