

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 241

Expressing the support for the enacting of joint custody laws for fit parents, so that more children are raised with the benefits of having a father and a mother in their lives.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 25, 2007

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland (for himself and Mr. ABERCROMBIE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the support for the enacting of joint custody laws for fit parents, so that more children are raised with the benefits of having a father and a mother in their lives.

Whereas, in approximately 84 percent of the cases where a parent is absent, that parent is the father;

Whereas if current trends continue, half of all children born today will live apart from one of their parents, usually their father, at some point before they turn 18 years old;

Whereas when families (whether intact or with a parent absent) are living in poverty, a significant factor is the father's lack of job skills;

Whereas committed and responsible fathering during infancy and early childhood contributes to the development of emotional security, curiosity, and math and verbal skills;

Whereas an estimated 19,400,000 children (27 percent) live apart from their biological fathers;

Whereas 40 percent of the children under age 18 not living with their biological fathers had not seen their fathers even once in the past 12 months, according to national survey data;

Whereas single parents are to be commended for the tremendous job that they do with their children;

Whereas the United States needs to encourage responsible parenting, by both fathers and mothers whenever possible;

Whereas the United States needs to encourage both parents (and extended families) to be actively involved in children's lives;

Whereas a way to do that is to encourage joint custody so that parents share children;

Whereas the American Bar Association found in 1997 that 19 States plus the District of Columbia had some form of presumption for joint custody, either legal, physical, or both, and since then, 13 additional States have added some form of presumption, bringing the current total to 32 States plus the District of Columbia;

Whereas Census Bureau data shows a correlation between joint custody and a higher payment of financial child support;

Whereas social science literature shows that children are generally well adjusted in an intact family with 2 parents in

the home, and research also shows that for children of divorced, separated, and never-married parents, joint custody is strongly associated with positive outcomes for children on important measures of adjustment and well-being;

Whereas research by the Department of Health and Human Services shows that the States with the highest amount of joint custody subsequently had the lowest divorce rate; and

Whereas parents with joint custody pay 50 percent more in child support than parents with visitation only or no contact with the child: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2 *concurring), That Congress expresses support of the*
- 3 *States passing joint custody laws for fit parents, so that*
- 4 *more children are raised with the benefit of having a fa-*
- 5 *ther and a mother in their lives, careful to protect victims*
- 6 *of domestic violence, abuse, neglect, children from poten-*
- 7 *tial kidnapping by a parent.*

