House
Legislative
Analysis
Section

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PARENTING PLAN ACT

House Bill 5636 (Substitute H-1)
Sponsor: Rep. James Ryan

House Bill 5637 (Substitute H-2*)
Sponsor: Rep. Jessie Dalman

Committee: Judiciary and Civil Rights

Revised First Analysis (5-30-96)

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Current statistics place the rate of divorce in our society at about 50 percent, and as a result there are an ever increasing number of children of divorced parents. Unfortunately, in most cases of divorce, the children become one of the greatest sources of contention. Many divorced parents allow their bitterness and anger toward their former spouse to interfere with the needs of their children. Which parent receives custody, the non-custodial parent's right to parenting time, how the child is to be reared and many other similar issues become sources of seemingly endless conflict; not only during the time leading up to the divorce but after the divorce as well. Many believe that this constant bickering is, in the end, far more damaging to the children of divorce than the divorce itself.

It has been suggested that action should be taken to alleviate as much of the potential conflict between divorcing parents regarding their children as is possible. Efforts should be made to encourage parents to cooperate with one another in the child rearing process. Requiring parents to agree upon and reduce to writing a parenting plan describing the children's needs and the parents' goals for them has been suggested as a means for helping to bring about a greater degree of cooperation between divorced parents.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILLS:

House Bill 5637 would create the Parenting Plan Act. Whenever a court entered a decree for divorce, separate maintenance, or annulment, the court would be required to establish a parenting plan for any minor children of the marriage.

The bill would require the parents of any child involved in a custody dispute to file a proposed parenting plan with the court in accordance with the rules set forth in the bill. Each parenting plan would be required to contain provisions that would govern the resolution of future disputes between the parents regarding the children, allocate parental decision making authority, schedule parenting time, and set forth the child's residential schedule. The state court administrative office would be required to develop a form for parents to use when completing a parenting plan. The form would have to indicate the subject matters that the act would require a parenting plan to address.

Objectives of the Parenting Plan. A parenting plan would have the following objectives: a) to have the child reared by both parents unless that is not in the child's best interests, b) to provide for the physical care (including specification of responsibility for health care expenses and health care coverage) of the child, c) to maintain the child's emotional stability, d) to provide for the child's needs as he or she matures in a way that will minimize the necessity for future modifications to the plan (including consideration of the child's education), e) to specify the authority and responsibilities of each parent consistent with the other provisions of the bill, f) to minimize the child's exposure to harmful parental conflict, g) to encourage the parents to meet their responsibilities to their children through agreements set forth in the plan rather than by relying on judicial intervention, and h) to otherwise protect the best interests of the child.

A parenting plan would be required to contain specific alternatives to court action for resolving disputes between parents. Alternative dispute resolution processes could include counseling, mediation, or arbitration by a specified individual or agency (including the friend of the court). The alternative dispute resolution process ordered in the plan would have to give preference to carrying out the parenting plan and a written record of an agreement reached by the parties through the plan's alternative dispute resolution process would have to be prepared and provided to each parent. The parents would be required to follow the dispute resolution process indicated in the plan to resolve disputes unless an emergency existed or

the dispute related to financial support. If the court found that either parent used or frustrated the use of the dispute resolution process without good cause, the court would be required to award attorney fees and financial sanctions to the prevailing parent. In addition, the result reached by the dispute resolution process would be subject to court review upon the petition of either parent.

Although either parent would have the authority to make emergency decisions regarding the child's health or safety, the parenting plan would have to allocate decision making authority to one or both of the parents with regard to the child's education, health care, and religious upbringing. The bill would allow a parenting plan to include any agreements between the parents concerning the child's care and growth in the specified areas or in any other areas. However, regardless of how the parenting plan allocated decision making authority, each parent would have the authority to make day to day decisions concerning care and control of the child during the time the child was residing with that parent. If the parenting plan prescribed mutual decision making and the parents were unable to reach a mutual decision on their own, they would be required to make a good faith effort to resolve the issue through the alternative dispute resolution process indicated in the plan.

The parenting plan would also have to include a residential schedule designating which parent the child would reside with on given days of the year. Specifically, the plan would have to indicate where the child would reside for holidays, vacations, birthdays of family members, and other special occasions.

Establishing and Implementing a Parenting Plan. Generally, parents would be required to agree upon and file a proposed parenting plan with the court before the hearing or determination of the child's custody. However, if the parents were unable to agree on the elements of the plan or either parent had committed domestic violence, each parent would have to file and serve separate proposed parenting plans. Each parent's proposed plan would be required to have a verified statement attached to it indicating that the plan had been proposed in good faith. The parents would have to file their respective plans by the earliest of either: 30 days after either parent files and serves notice requesting a pretrial conference, or 180 days after the commencement of the action (however, the parents could stipulate to extend this deadline). If necessary, either parent could amend his or her proposed plan in accordance with the court rules regarding the amendment of pleadings.

The court could not order the implementation of any parenting plan until it had held a hearing on the plan or plans. However, if one of the parties filed a proposed plan and the other did not, the party that had filed its plan could ask the court to adopt its plan and find the other party in default. When scheduling a hearing or trial on an action involving minor children under the parenting plan act, the court would be required to give precedence to that action over other civil actions.

Unless there was evidence that one of the parents committed domestic violence, parents who filed differing parenting plans or were otherwise in dispute about the substance of their parenting plan would be required to attempt to reach a mutual agreement through use of an alternative dispute resolution process either through the friend of the court's mediation services or through another agency that both parties agreed upon.

If the alternative dispute resolution process was unsuccessful or inapplicable, and the court rules provided for it, parents who had filed separate proposed plans could be required to attend a mandatory settlement conference presided over by the judge or a friend of the court referee. The parents would be required to review the terms of each other's proposed plan and review any other issues relevant to the action with the judge or referee. Any facts or legal issues which the parties agreed upon or were not in dispute at that time would be entered as stipulated for the purposes of the final hearing or trial. (If necessary, the judge or referee could limit a parent's access to and control over the child as required by the act, in spite of any agreement by the parents.)

The court could hold a parent in contempt for failing to comply with the provisions of a parenting plan; however, the failure to comply with the provisions of a parenting plan or a child support order by one parent would not relieve the other parent of his or her responsibilities under that plan or order. Furthermore, the language of the parenting plan would have to specifically state that a failure to comply with its provisions by one party would not serve to release the other party from his or her responsibilities.

A permanent parenting plan would also be required to contain language specifying that the parties would be required to give preference to carrying out the plan. In addition, the plan would have to indicate that the parents would be required to use the designated dispute resolution process to resolve disputes (unless an emergency existed or the dispute related to financial support), and that a written record of any agreements reached through alternative dispute resolution would be made and a copy of that agreement would be provided

to each parent. The plan would also have to include provisions allowing either parent to make emergency decisions affecting the child's health or safety, and to make decisions regarding the child's day-to-day care and control while the child is residing with that parent.

Furthermore, if the parenting plan provided for mutual decision making by the parents, but the parents were unable to reach a consensus on a particular decision, the parents would be required to make a good faith effort to resolve the dispute through the use of the prescribed alternative dispute resolution process. In addition, the plan would have to contain language requiring such behavior of the parents.

Decision Making Authority. The court would be required to approve an allocation of decision making authority or specification of rules regarding the child's upbringing that the parents of the child had agreed upon, provided that the court found the agreement was consistent with any limitations mandated by the act, was made knowingly and voluntarily, and was in the best interests of the child. If the parties were unable to reach an agreement regarding the allocation of decision making authority or the court was unable to approve the parents' agreement because it was inconsistent with the requirements above the court would be required to allocate decision making authority based upon the child's best interests.

The court would be required to provide sole decision making authority to one of the parents, if the court found any of the following: a parent had willfully abandoned the child for an extended period of time or substantially refused to perform parenting functions, a parent had engaged in physical, sexual, or a pattern of emotional abuse of the child, or had a history of acts of domestic violence, assault, or sexual assault; both parents were opposed to mutual decision making; or one parent was opposed to mutual decision making and that opposition was reasonable based upon the following factors: the history of each parent's decision making regarding the child's education, health care and religious upbringing; whether the parents have demonstrated an ability and desire to cooperate with one another in decisions regarding the child; and the parents' geographical proximity to one another to the extent that it affects their ability to make timely mutual decisions. These same factors would have to be considered by the court in allocating decision making authority.

Residential or Parenting Time. In establishing residential or parenting time provisions in a plan, the court would be required to base those provisions on the best interests of the child to encourage each parent to maintain a loving, stable, and nurturing relationship with the child, consistent with the child's developmental level and the family's social and economic circumstances. Provided that the court found none of the factors listed in the bill that would limit one of the parent's contact with the child (abuse, etc.), the court would also have to consider the following factors when determining the child's residential schedule: 1) the relative strength, nature, and stability of the child's relationship with each parent, including consideration of which parent had taken greater responsibility in performing parenting functions relating to the child's daily needs, 2) the existence of an agreement, entered knowingly and voluntarily, between the parents, 3) the past and potential future performance of parenting functions by each parent, 4) the emotional needs and developmental level of the child, 5) the child's relationship with siblings and other significant adults, as well as the child's involvement with his or her physical surroundings, school, or other significant activities, 6) the wishes of the child (provided that the child is sufficiently mature to express reasoned and independent preferences), and 7) each parent's employment schedule.

In order to determine a child's wishes regarding the child's residential schedule in a proceeding for a divorce, separate maintenance, or annulment, the court would be allowed to interview the child in chambers. If it so chooses, the court could allow counsel to be present during the court's interview with the child. In addition, the court could seek the advice of professional personnel, whether or not employed by the court. The advice of such professionals would be required to be made in writing and would have to be made available to the parties' counsel on request. Any professional consulted by the court could be called by the counsel of either party for the purpose of cross-examination.

If appropriate, the court could order that the plan require the child to frequently alternate residence between the parents' households for brief and substantially equal intervals of time. In order to make such a provision part of the plan, the court would be required to make all of the following findings: a) such a schedule would be in the best interests of the child, b) neither parent was subject to any limitations or restrictions on their contact with the child under the bill, and c) either the parents agreed on the schedule or the parents had a history of cooperation and shared performance of parenting functions, and were available to each other, especially in geographic proximity, to the extent necessary to ensure shared performance of parenting functions.

Alternative Dispute Resolution. In designating the form of alternative dispute resolution to be used under the plan the court would have to consider all of the relevant factors. These factors would include, but not be limited to, all of the following: differences between the parents that would substantially inhibit their ability to effectively participate in any designated process, the parents' wishes or agreements (provided they were made knowingly and voluntarily), and differences in the parents' financial circumstances which could affect their ability to participate fully in a given dispute resolution process.

Limitations on the elements of parenting plan. The court could not establish a parenting plan that would require alternative dispute resolution if either of the parents was unable to afford the cost of the proposed resolution process. Furthermore, the court could not establish a parenting plan that would require mutual decision making or designation of an alternative dispute resolution process if the court found that one of the parents had engaged in any of the following conduct: a) willful abandonment for an extended period of time or substantial refusal to perform parenting functions, b) physical, sexual, or a pattern of emotional abuse of a child, c) a history of domestic violence or an assault or sexual assault that caused grievous bodily harm or fear of such harm. In addition, if the court determined that one of the parents had engaged in any of the preceding activities, the plan would have to *limit* that parent's parenting time with the child. However, the court would be required to consider the amount of time that had passed since such conduct had occurred when it limited parenting time based one of those activities.

The plan would also be required to *limit* a parent's parenting time if the court found that the parent was residing with an individual who had engaged in either the physical, sexual, or emotional abuse of a child, or had a history of acts of domestic violence or assault or sexual assault that caused grievous bodily harm or the fear of such harm.

Furthermore, if a parent had been convicted as an adult of committing an act that was a violation of Michigan's criminal sexual conduct (CSC) statute, the court would be required to establish a plan which *restrained* that parent from having contact with the child. The plan would also have to *restrain* a parent from having contact with his or her child if the parent resided with a third party who had been convicted as an adult or adjudicated as a juvenile for one or more violations of the CSC statutes. However, the court could allow the parent to have contact with the child provided that the child's contact with the parent only occurred outside of the other person's presence, or the court could permit contact between the parent and child in the third party's presence provided that the third party was the parent's minor child or ward.

Any restrictions set forth in the parenting plan *limiting* a parent's contact with his or her child, based upon the reasons cited above, would have to be reasonably calculated to protect the child from physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harm. If the court expressly found, based upon the evidence and on the record, that merely *limiting* the parent's parenting time would not adequately protect the child, the court would be required to *restrain* the parent from having any contact with the child. Furthermore, if either the parent or an individual that the parent resided with had been found to have sexually abused the child either by clear and convincing evidence in a civil action or by a preponderance of the evidence in a juvenile action, the court could not enter an order that would permit that parent to have any contact with the child. However, the court could allow contact, if it found that the individual who had sexually abused the child was the parent's minor child or ward and that the safety and welfare of the child subject to the parenting plan would be adequately protected.

If the court decided to limit a parent's parenting time, it could require that the parent have only supervised contact with the child. The court could only appoint an individual as a supervisor if the court found that prospective supervisor had accepted that the parent in question had abused the child and that he or she, as supervisor, was willing to protect the child and was capable of doing so. If at any time the court found, based upon the evidence and on the record, that the supervisor had failed to protect the child, was no longer willing to protect the child, or was no longer capable of doing so, the court would be required to revoke its approval of that individual as a supervisor.

If the court found that the contact between the parent and the child would not cause physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or harm to the child and that the probability that either the parent or another individual will harm the child is so remote that it would be in the child's best interests to ignore the act's limitations, then the court could choose not to apply the limitations required by the act. However, if the parent had been convicted of criminal sexual conduct as an adult or was residing with someone who had been convicted as an adult or adjudicated as a juvenile of CSC, or if the court determines that limitation on the parent's parenting time would not adequately protect the child from harm or abuse that could result if the parent was allowed to have contact with the child, the court could not ignore the limitations required by the act. In

addition, it would be within the court's discretion to decide on what amount of weight should be given to the existence of a personal protection order in making its determinations.

In addition, the court could "preclude or limit the parenting plan" if a parent's involvement or conduct could have an adverse effect on the best interests of the child. An adverse effect could be evidenced by any of the following factors: parental neglect or substantial nonperformance of parenting functions; a long term impairment due to drug, alcohol, or other substance abuse that interferes with the parent's performance of his or her parenting functions; the absence or substantial impairment of emotional ties between the parent and the child; the abusive use of conflict by the parent that creates the danger of serious damage to the child's psychological development; a finding that the parent had withheld access to the child from the other parent for a protracted period of time without good cause; or, any other factors that the court expressly finds are adverse to the child's best interests. The court would be required to follow the civil rules of evidence, proof, and procedure to determine whether any of the conduct listed above had occurred.

Temporary Orders. Either parent could seek to have a proposed temporary parenting plan entered as part of a temporary order. The parent would be required to file and serve a proposed temporary parenting plan by motion. If the other party was contesting the proposed temporary parenting plan, he or she would have to file and serve a responsive proposed parenting plan. The parents could enter an agreed temporary parenting plan at any time as part of a temporary order. The proposed temporary parenting plan could be supported by relevant evidence and would be required to be accompanied by an affidavit that states at a minimum all of the following: a) the name, address, and length of residence of the individual or individuals that the child has resided with for the preceding twelve months; b) the performance by each parent of the parenting functions relating to the child's daily needs during the preceding twelve months; c) the parents' work and child care schedules for the preceding twelve months; d) the parents' current work and child care schedules; and e) any reasons under the act that either parent's contact with the child could be limited or restrained that are likely to pose a serious risk to the child and warrant limitation on the temporary residence or parenting time pending the entry of a permanent plan.

Determinations and proposed orders regarding temporary parenting plans would be made by the friend of the court. However, if the friend of the court was unable to make a determination or either party objected to the order proposed by the friend of the court, either party could make a motion to have the court hold a hearing on the temporary parenting plan.

At a hearing on a temporary parenting plan, the court would be required to enter a temporary parenting order that would incorporate a temporary parenting plan that included all of the following: a schedule for the child's parenting time with each parent when appropriate, designation of a temporary residence or residences, allocation of decision making authority, if any (if no allocation of decision making authority can be made, neither party would be allowed to make a decision for the child other than those relating to day-to-day or emergency care), temporary support for the child, and a personal protection order, where applicable.

A parent could make a motion to amend a temporary parenting plan, and the court could order the amendment of a plan, if the amendment conformed with the limitations under the act and was in the best interests of the child. Any temporary order or temporary parenting plan would be vacated if the proceeding for divorce, separate maintenance, or annulment from which it had arisen was dismissed.

The court would not be allowed to draw any presumptions from the provisions of a temporary plan when entering a permanent plan.

Modification of Parenting Plans. Every five years after the parenting plan was established the court would, upon the filing of a petition for a hearing by one of the parties subject to the plan's provisions, be required to hold a hearing to review the plan. The purpose of the review would be to determine whether the plan was still serving the best interests of the child. If the court determined that it would be in the child's best interests to modify the plan, the court could do so at that time.

The court would not be allowed to modify a permanent parenting plan unless one parent showed proper cause for a modification or a change of circumstances since the entry of the parenting plan order. The moving party would have to present clear and convincing evidence that the modification would be in the best interests of the child.

However, the court could order adjustments to the plan upon a showing of a change in circumstances of either the parent or the child, provided that the proposed modification was only one or more of the following: a) a modification of the dispute resolution process, b) a minor modification of the residential schedule that did not change the residence that the child was scheduled to reside in the majority of the time and didn't exceed 24

full days in a calendar year or 5 full days in a calendar month, c) a modification that was due to a change in residence or an involuntary change in work schedule that made the current residential schedule impractical to follow.

If the court found that a petition to modify a parenting plan had been brought or a refusal to comply with a modification had been made in bad faith, the court would be required to assess the attorney fees and court costs of the non-moving parent against the moving party.

A parent seeking a temporary parenting plan or seeking to modify an existing parenting plan would be required to submit an affidavit with his or her petition. The affidavit would have to set forth the facts supporting the requested order or modification. A petition for modification of a parenting plan would have to be filed in the county of the court that had issued the plan implementing the plan. The party seeking the temporary plan or modification would also have to provide the other parties to the proceeding with notice of the petition and a copy of the affidavit. The opposing party could then file opposing affidavits. Unless the court found adequate cause for having a hearing on the matter based on the affidavits, the court would be required to deny the petition. If the court found cause to have a hearing on the matter, it could set a date for hearing on an order to show cause why the requested plan or modification should not be ordered.

Designation of Custodial Parent. Solely for the purposes of determining the legal or physical custody of a child as required in other state or federal statutes, such as, for example, tax exemptions or health care benefits, the court could specifically designate (either in the parenting plan or in a separate order) the child's legal or physical custodian. The designation would not affect the rights and responsibilities of either parent under the parenting plan. If the court did not make such a designation, the parent with whom the child spends the majority of time would be considered the child's custodian.

Tie-bar. The bill is tie-barred to House Bills 4432 (which would amend the divorce statute), 5635 (which would require counseling before issuance of a marriage license), 5636 (which would amend the Child Custody Act), 5634 (which would consolidate certain provisions of several acts dealing with child support into the Support and Parenting Time Enforcement Act), 5627 (which would encourage the friend of the court to use electronic methods for transferring funds), and 5628 (which would require the establishment of a spousal support formula).

House Bill 5636 would amend the Child Custody Act (MCL 722.23 et al.) by adding a factor to the list of factors currently used by the court to determine what is in the "best interests of the child". The second factor for consideration is currently: "The capacity and disposition of the parties involved to give the child love, affection, and guidance and to continue the education and raising of the child in his or her religion or creed, if any." The bill would split this factor, making the capacity of the parties "to continue the education and raising of the child in his or her religion or creed" a separate factor.

The bill would also provide that if a child was subject to a parenting plan under the Parenting Plan Act (which would be established by House Bill 5637), the court could order the child's parents to be governed by the plan without designating either party as the child's legal or physical custodian. The bill is tie-barred to House Bill 5637.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Fiscal information is not available.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

Parenting plans have been used in other states with positive results, starting with Washington in 1988. The use of these plans has been effective in helping to alleviate one of the most serious problems about divorce: the fact that nearly 50 percent of the divorced parents who do not receive custody simply drop out of their children's lives. According to most studies children generally seem to do best when both parents remain part of their lives.

These bills attempt to ameliorate the impact of divorce by reducing conflict between the parents, maintaining parenting roles and responsibilities and meaningful relationships between the parents and the children, and providing children with support through the transition. The current system's emphasis on the adversarial process to determine custody, support, and visitation does little to address the children's needs. The bills' requirements will help to make parents more sensitive to the impact of divorce on their children and will help parents to remain involved in their children's lives, and to consider the fact that as parents they must work together for the sake of their children's well-being. The bills would help to prevent parents from thinking of custody issues in terms of fighting over who will have possession of the child. It is hoped that instead they will think of what is best for their child.

The bills provide a needed alternative to reliance upon court orders; parents are encouraged to work together to plan and come to agreement about how their children are to be raised. Neither parent is given special consideration; no legal presumption is contained in the bills providing that either the mother or the father will have superior position. The emphasis is on the best interests of the child, and first consideration is given, in any decision, to how the child will be affected. Both parents will have to work out decisions regarding how the child will be raised, and where conflicts arise alternative dispute resolution procedures will be used rather than simply going to court.

Against:

In general, the bills are ambitious and, to some degree as a result, are ungainly. They try to do too much at once, without careful consideration of the current law and how these changes will affect it. Too little time has been spent investigating the possible consequences of the substantial impact this could have on current law and the problems its implementation could cause. The public and those involved in the system have had little opportunity to read and analyze, much less testify, on the versions of the bills that were reported from the subcommittee.

Although the idea of trying to limit conflict in the decisions of divorced parents regarding their children is certainly admirable, this package fails to take into account the existing child-focused family law. Rather than decreasing tension in divorce situations, these bills are likely to increase the conflict or force it to the forefront. The bills add new claims and causes of action that disputing parents would have to consider during the divorce litigation. Requiring the parties to plan every detail at the time of the divorce will also serve to increase the likelihood of conflict. There are couples who are able to get along well enough that they wouldn't need to plan every holiday and vacation for the next 18 years at the time of the divorce, but by requiring them to go through the planning process at the time of the divorce they may end up fighting over details that, had they had the opportunity to deal with them in the fullness of time, they would not have fought over.

Much of the new language in the parenting plan bill, House Bill 5637, is ambiguous. Terms that have been long used in family law -- "the best interests of the child" standard, for example -- is used throughout the bill but in conjunction with new and often conflicting and/or overlapping standards. A great deal of the language in the bill is undefined and will likely require costly court fights and time consuming appeals before reliable definitions are established. For example, what does it mean to "rear" a child? The dictionary defines the term in the context of children as meaning "to bring up", which doesn't serve to make its implications any clearer. (Some argue that the use of the term provides a basis for requiring joint physical custody; others disagree, arguing that it merely emphasizes the fact that both parents will be involved in the decision making regarding how the child will be raised.) Other possible sources of confusion (and therefore litigation) include: What constitutes an "extended period of time" in terms of willful abandonment? What is a "substantial refusal to perform parenting functions"? Other terms, although defined, are not made more clear by their definitions; e.g., "domestic violence" and "serious emotional abuse". More confusion is created by the unwillingness to use many terms that have long been used in domestic relations law and have commonly understood meanings. The avoidance of the word "custody" (legal or physical) is a particularly glaring example. Creating euphemistic phrases will not solve problems created by immature, domineering, and/or uninformed parents. For these parents, a clear message using real definitions about custodians and custodial rights and boundaries may be the best protection the law can provide their children.

This package will significantly increase the already overwhelming burden that divorce and custody cases place on the judicial system. Although parents would be required to attempt to use alternative dispute resolution to resolve their disagreements, they are allowed, and indeed may be expected, to appeal to circuit court and on up in certain instances. It seems unlikely to expect that at least one of the parties won't disagree with the decision of the arbitrator, and in fact, if the arbitrator attempts to reach some middle ground it is likely that both parties will disagree with the decision.

POSITIONS:

The Michigan Family Forum supports the bills. (5-22-96)

The Michigan Catholic Conference supports the concept of the bills. (5-22-96)

The Michigan Chapter of the National Organization for Women supports the bills. (5-28-96)

The Domestic Violence Prevention and Treatment Board supports the bills. (5-29-96)

The Family Independence Agency supports the bills. (5-29-96)

The Friend of the Court Association supports the bills. (5-29-96)

The Michigan Coalition Against Domestic Violence supports the concept of the parenting plan act but would oppose the bills if the provisions presume joint physical custody. (5-29-96)

Voices for Children Michigan supports the concept of the parenting plan act but would oppose the bills if the provisions presume joint physical custody. (5-22-96)

The Michigan Judges Association does not support the bills. (5-29-96)

The State Bar of Michigan - Family Law Council opposes the bills. (5-22-96)

Michigan Parents for Children Coalition opposes the bills. (5-22-96)

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.