

SB 318 Testimony

My name is Garry Young Jr and I am father of a beautiful daughter who was born September 8, 2016 and taken away from me 2 months later.

I am writing my to explain why I support SB 318 and why I think it should be passed.

I am currently 33 years old. When my daughter was born, 5 weeks early, I rushed from my work, which that day brought me to Coos Bay, Oregon. I made the drive soon as I heard. I was there, at the hospital for 2 weeks with my girlfriend at the time and our new born baby girl. Being a premie baby, she was in NICU for 2 weeks. The NICU team had procedures for us and our daughter in order to leave. Once Lyrric, our daughter was healthy and OK enough to leave, all the things the NICU team looked for in the parents, were satisfactory as well, for both MOTHER and FATHER.

Fast forward 2 months. I am at my sisters for a weekend. My gf packs up all of our daughters items and most of her own, just left. No note, phone call or anything. You can imagine how livid I was coming to a home where my family was just at and now are gone, being taken from me.

Our first court hearing was in January. I have no criminal history, drug or alcohol abuse record, own my own home since 2008, been at the same job since since 2011 with promotions as well.

I was told from the system that my time with our daughter would be 6 hours a week, 2 hours on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday's, all at the grandparents house, where mother and daughter are living. This went on for much longer than it should have. Few more court hearings have happened and time was increased, very small. The weekdays stood in affect and the Sunday time was changed from the 2 hours at their house to 1pm - 5pm, at my house but with supervision from my parents who were 1.5 hours away. I was also responsible for all travel regarding our daughter. She won the battle that I as well needed to take a parenting class since I was a new parent, as well as she was. I took time out of work for 2 hours each Wednesday to complete the 6-8 week class. I actually had to complete that in order to move to the next phase of custody, which was picking up our daughter for the 4 hour visit on Sunday's. Now, September of 2018 comes along and due to the parenting plan they changed, chopped and added from Josephine County and Jackson County, when she turns 2, I will get 5.5 hours a week, 3.5 on Wednesday since I get off work early and 2 hours Friday. I am responsible for pick up. Mind you, I live 15-25 minutes from her mother. A two hour 'visit' is horrendous on us for travel. Take a 2 year old on a 40 minute round trip drive to spend quality time with her father for 2 hours. That leaves just over an 1.5 of bonding time with our daughter. This plan is there until she turns 3, at that time, I will gain weekends from Friday evening to Monday Morning and still have the weekdays. My time will increase from 70 hours a month to 146 hours. I see that is double but it is nowhere near 50/50 as Lyrric needs.

Now, during all this time, I has missed dentist appointments, I have missed doctors

appointments. I had to go back to the hospital to prove I was the father and get back on her records to get information as the mother had me removed. She hardly informs me of appointments and when she does, she gives me maybe an hour of notice, which most appointments are during the day. That means I cannot just leave work. I have asked for extra time for grandparents on my side, as one set 1.5 hours away and the other in 6 hours away. The times asked are for just grandparents and at times, I would be there too. No agreement from our daughters mother at all for extra time. Even if I am out of the area for work, she will not rearrange at all.

I know every case is different and SB318 might have some grey area, as any bill will. But to start off with shared parenting rights, a 50/50 schedule would be a huge improvement to our children's future here in Oregon.

Aren't you innocent till proven guilty? The claims that were said against me in court are not true. They are fabricated to hurt me, to take away our daughter from her father, who is very involved and wants to be more.

Due to the current Oregon laws and court system, Oregon has forced this father to miss out on SO MANY milestones of my first child. Oregon has impacted my life in a big way, a way I should not have to fight this hard for.

I please ask that you take the time to understand all of us parents who are fighting a system in which we feel we may never win but our kids need us to fight.

I will never back down, I will never give up. You will continue to see my name and face until the system is changed for these helpless kids who have no say.

Thank you for your time,

Garry Young Jr
Jackson County Oregon