

**Testimony in Support of the Rebuttable Shared Parenting Law**  
**Danny Lunde**  
**Date: 12/17/24**

Honorable members of the legislature, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Danny Lunde, and I stand before you as a father—one who has experienced the profound impact of a broken family court system and the devastating effects of parental alienation.

I became a father at 20, when my first son, Tanner, was born on August 6, 1994. Tanner was my world, and for the first 10 years of his life, I was there every day. We had no behavior problems, no learning difficulties, no self-esteem issues—he was just a joyful, driven child, full of dreams and potential.

But then, starting at age 10, the courts reduced my time with Tanner to just a few days a month. My influence in his life was systematically diminished, and I watched in helplessness as he fell into a pattern of destructive behaviors. The child I had known became a drug and alcohol abuser, dropped out of high school, and struggled with his mental health—all while I was pushed to the sidelines, unable to intervene, unable to be the father he needed.

As Tanner entered his 20s, we started to rebuild our relationship, but it has never been the same. Years of lost time cannot be undone, and the child I once knew is now dependent on me for financial support and stability. It's an awkward relationship, but I'm grateful we've reconnected. Still, I can't help but mourn the connection we once shared—because of the way the system separated us.

Parental alienation is real. It's a consequence of the system's failure to prioritize the best interests of children. The truth is often manipulated, and the voices of fathers are silenced. In the case of my son, Tanner, I can't help but wonder what he could have become, what we could have built together, if only I had been given the chance to remain a constant, guiding presence in his life.

I know I'm not alone. I've seen the same patterns play out with my other children. My second daughter, Tristin, is a bright, high-achieving young woman—she's on her way to becoming a dentist. Despite the system's attempt to divide us, I maintained a strong bond with her. We wrote letters, communicated daily, and I supported her financially through her education and wedding. Still, I can't shake the feeling that I missed so much of her life, that I was robbed of important moments.

And then there's Bryn, my youngest. I fought the system harder for her than anyone. I spent everything I had, emotionally and financially, to secure a relationship with her. I found out how easy it is for falsehoods to be accepted in court, and how fathers are so often dismissed as secondary parents, even when they are the ones who love and care for their children the most. The battle I fought for Bryn was nothing short of heartbreaking, and I will never get back those precious years lost.



This is why I stand before you today in strong support of a Rebuttable Shared Parenting Law. **50/50 shared parenting is in the best interests of every child.** Children deserve to have both parents actively involved in their lives, not just one who is allowed to remain a peripheral figure. The current system, which favors one parent over the other, does irreparable harm to children and families. It causes emotional trauma, loss of connection, and missed opportunities for growth and love.

No parent—especially a father—should be pushed aside by a system that claims to act in the "best interests of the child" when it does exactly the opposite. A rebuttable shared parenting law would ensure fairness and equity, and most importantly, it would protect children from the devastating effects of parental alienation.

I ask you today to put the needs of children first. They have no voice in these matters, and fathers are often left without a fair chance to be the parents they were meant to be. **We need 50/50 shared parenting to be the standard in family law.**

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to support this bill for the sake of our children and future generations.