

Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2186 (Three Strikes Bill)
Presented to the Judiciary Committee
March 13, 2025

Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Lucy Bauer, and I am here today to speak on behalf of myself and my children, who have suffered tremendously due to the lack of enforcement and accountability in family court decisions. I have been fighting since 2017 to maintain a relationship with my four children, only to be repeatedly denied by a system that enables parental alienation and disregards its own court orders.

In 2017, Judge John Grinsteiner of Morton County forced me to hand over my children to their father, despite their cries for me to protect them. The decision was made in private, a week after the hearing, and stripped me of meaningful parenting time—reducing my role to every other weekend, certain holidays, and four one-week blocks in the summer. This ruling was based on false allegations, and I have been treated as if I were a criminal ever since.

The consequences of this decision have been devastating—not just for me, but for my children and our entire family. I have been alienated from them, as have my mother and two sisters, severing the bonds they once had with extended family. My children have been left without proper parental guidance. They have been forced to homeschool themselves with no supervision, and by age 15, they were told to work full-time during school hours, falling far behind in their education. I have been denied any involvement in their schooling, even though my court order grants me that right.

Despite numerous attempts to enforce the court's own orders, I have been met with indifference. I have hired six different attorneys, all of whom took my money but failed to take any meaningful action. Meanwhile, my ex-husband continues to violate the law, knowing full well that there are no real consequences. He has withheld my children from me on numerous occasions, disregarding court-ordered parenting time, and each time, my pleas for enforcement have gone unanswered.

This is why I strongly support **SB 2186, the Three Strikes Bill**—because **without enforcement, court orders are meaningless**. The law must hold repeat offenders accountable when they intentionally interfere with a child's right to both parents. This is not about mothers versus fathers; it is about ensuring that no parent, regardless of gender, can weaponize the system to alienate their children. The damage caused by parental alienation is profound and lasting. My children have been robbed of a healthy, loving relationship with their mother, and I have been left powerless to help them.

I urge this committee to **pass SB 2186** so that parents like me are no longer forced to fight an endless battle for the right to be in our children's lives. No child should be made to feel abandoned by a loving parent. No parent should have to endure years of separation while the courts turn a blind eye. The system must be reformed to ensure that court orders are enforced and that those who violate them are held accountable.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I am willing to testify before anyone, at any time, to share how this broken system has devastated my family. I sincerely hope that you will take action to **protect children** like mine and ensure that the rights of loving parents are upheld.

Lucy Bauer