

House _____ Amendment NO. _____

Offered By _____

1 AMEND House Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 850, Page 18, Section 210.498, Line 36,
2 by inserting immediately after said line the following:

3
4 "452.375. 1. As used in this chapter, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

5 (1) "Custody" means joint legal custody, sole legal custody, joint physical custody or sole
6 physical custody or any combination thereof;

7 (2) "Joint legal custody" means that the parents share the decision-making rights,
8 responsibilities, and authority relating to the health, education and welfare of the child, and, unless
9 allocated, apportioned, or decreed, the parents shall confer with one another in the exercise of
10 decision-making rights, responsibilities, and authority;

11 (3) "Joint physical custody" means an order awarding each of the parents significant, but not
12 necessarily equal, periods of time during which a child resides with or is under the care and
13 supervision of each of the parents. Joint physical custody shall be shared by the parents in such a
14 way as to assure the child of frequent, continuing and meaningful contact with both parents;

15 (4) "Third-party custody" means a third party designated as a legal and physical custodian
16 pursuant to subdivision (5) of subsection 5 of this section.

17 2. The court shall determine custody in accordance with the best interests of the child.
18 There shall be a rebuttable presumption that an award of equal or approximately equal parenting
19 time to each parent is in the best interests of the child. Such presumption is rebuttable only by a
20 preponderance of the evidence in accordance with all relevant factors including, but not limited to,
21 the factors contained in subdivisions (1) to (8) of this subsection. When the parties have not
22 reached an agreement on all issues related to custody, the court shall consider all relevant factors
23 and enter written findings of fact and conclusions of law, including, but not limited to, the
24 following:

25 (1) The wishes of the child's parents as to custody and the proposed parenting plan
26 submitted by both parties;

27 (2) The needs of the child for a frequent, continuing and meaningful relationship with both
28 parents and the ability and willingness of parents to actively perform their functions as mother and
29 father for the needs of the child;

30 (3) The interaction and interrelationship of the child with parents, siblings, and any other
31 person who may significantly affect the child's best interests;

32 (4) Which parent is more likely to allow the child frequent, continuing and meaningful
33 contact with the other parent;

34 (5) The child's adjustment to the child's home, school, and community;

35 (6) The mental and physical health of all individuals involved, including any history of
36 abuse of any individuals involved. If the court finds that a pattern of domestic violence as defined

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1 in section 455.010 has occurred, and, if the court also finds that awarding custody to the abusive
2 parent is in the best interest of the child, then the court shall enter written findings of fact and
3 conclusions of law. Custody and visitation rights shall be ordered in a manner that best protects the
4 child and any other child or children for whom the parent has custodial or visitation rights, and the
5 parent or other family or household member who is the victim of domestic violence from any
6 further harm;

7 (7) The intention of either parent to relocate the principal residence of the child; and

8 (8) The wishes of a child as to the child's custodian. The fact that a parent sends his or her
9 child or children to a home school, as defined in section 167.031, shall not be the sole factor that a
10 court considers in determining custody of such child or children.

11 3. (1) In any court proceedings relating to custody of a child, the court shall not award
12 custody or unsupervised visitation of a child to a parent if such parent or any person residing with
13 such parent has been found guilty of, or pled guilty to, any of the following offenses when a child
14 was the victim:

15 (a) A felony violation of section 566.030, 566.032, 566.031, 566.060, 566.062, 566.064,
16 566.067, 566.068, 566.061, 566.083, 566.101, 566.100, 566.111, 566.151, 566.203, 566.206,
17 566.209, 566.211, or 566.215;

18 (b) A violation of section 568.020;

19 (c) A violation of subdivision (2) of subsection 1 of section 568.060;

20 (d) A violation of section 568.065;

21 (e) A violation of section 573.200;

22 (f) A violation of section 573.205; or

23 (g) A violation of section 568.175.

24 (2) For all other violations of offenses in chapters 566 and 568 not specifically listed in
25 subdivision (1) of this subsection or for a violation of an offense committed in another state when a
26 child is the victim that would be a violation of chapter 566 or 568 if committed in Missouri, the
27 court may exercise its discretion in awarding custody or visitation of a child to a parent if such
28 parent or any person residing with such parent has been found guilty of, or pled guilty to, any such
29 offense.

30 4. The general assembly finds and declares that it is the public policy of this state that
31 frequent, continuing and meaningful contact with both parents after the parents have separated or
32 dissolved their marriage is in the best interest of the child, except for cases where the court
33 specifically finds that such contact is not in the best interest of the child, and that it is the public
34 policy of this state to encourage parents to participate in decisions affecting the health, education
35 and welfare of their children, and to resolve disputes involving their children amicably through
36 alternative dispute resolution. In order to effectuate these policies, the court shall determine the
37 custody arrangement which will best assure both parents participate in such decisions and have
38 frequent, continuing and meaningful contact with their children so long as it is in the best interests
39 of the child.

40 5. Prior to awarding the appropriate custody arrangement in the best interest of the child,
41 the court shall consider each of the following as follows:

42 (1) Joint physical and joint legal custody to both parents, which shall not be denied solely
43 for the reason that one parent opposes a joint physical and joint legal custody award. The residence
44 of one of the parents shall be designated as the address of the child for mailing and educational
45 purposes;

46 (2) Joint physical custody with one party granted sole legal custody. The residence of one
47 of the parents shall be designated as the address of the child for mailing and educational purposes;

48 (3) Joint legal custody with one party granted sole physical custody;

1 (4) Sole custody to either parent; or

2 (5) Third-party custody or visitation:

3 (a) When the court finds that each parent is unfit, unsuitable, or unable to be a custodian, or
4 the welfare of the child requires, and it is in the best interests of the child, then custody, temporary
5 custody or visitation may be awarded to any other person or persons deemed by the court to be
6 suitable and able to provide an adequate and stable environment for the child. Before the court
7 awards custody, temporary custody or visitation to a third person under this subdivision, the court
8 shall make that person a party to the action;

9 (b) Under the provisions of this subsection, any person may petition the court to intervene
10 as a party in interest at any time as provided by supreme court rule.

11 6. If the parties have not agreed to a custodial arrangement, or the court determines such
12 arrangement is not in the best interest of the child, the court shall include a written finding in the
13 judgment or order based on the public policy in subsection 4 of this section and each of the factors
14 listed in subdivisions (1) to (8) of subsection 2 of this section detailing the specific relevant factors
15 that made a particular arrangement in the best interest of the child. If a proposed custodial
16 arrangement is rejected by the court, the court shall include a written finding in the judgment or
17 order detailing the specific relevant factors resulting in the rejection of such arrangement.

18 7. Upon a finding by the court that either parent has refused to exchange information with
19 the other parent, which shall include but not be limited to information concerning the health,
20 education and welfare of the child, the court shall order the parent to comply immediately and to
21 pay the prevailing party a sum equal to the prevailing party's cost associated with obtaining the
22 requested information, which shall include but not be limited to reasonable attorney's fees and court
23 costs.

24 8. As between the parents of a child, no preference may be given to either parent in the
25 awarding of custody because of that parent's age, sex, or financial status, nor because of the age or
26 sex of the child. The court shall not presume that a parent, solely because of his or her sex, is more
27 qualified than the other parent to act as a joint or sole legal or physical custodian for the child.

28 9. Any judgment providing for custody shall include a specific written parenting plan
29 setting forth the terms of such parenting plan arrangements specified in subsection 8 of section
30 452.310. Such plan may be a parenting plan submitted by the parties pursuant to section 452.310
31 or, in the absence thereof, a plan determined by the court, but in all cases, the custody plan approved
32 and ordered by the court shall be in the court's discretion and shall be in the best interest of the
33 child.

34 10. After August 28, 2016, every court order establishing or modifying custody or visitation
35 shall include the following language: "In the event of noncompliance with this order, the aggrieved
36 party may file a verified motion for contempt. If custody, visitation, or third-party custody is denied
37 or interfered with by a parent or third party without good cause, the aggrieved person may file a
38 family access motion with the court stating the specific facts that constitute a violation of the
39 custody provisions of the judgment of dissolution, legal separation, or judgment of paternity. The
40 circuit clerk will provide the aggrieved party with an explanation of the procedures for filing a
41 family access motion and a simple form for use in filing the family access motion. A family access
42 motion does not require the assistance of legal counsel to prepare and file."

43 11. No court shall adopt any local rule, form, or practice requiring a standardized or default
44 parenting plan for interim, temporary, or permanent orders or judgments. Notwithstanding any
45 other provision of law to the contrary, a court may enter an interim order in a proceeding under this
46 chapter, provided that the interim order shall not contain any provisions about child custody or a
47 parenting schedule or plan without first providing the parties with notice and a hearing, unless the
48 parties otherwise agree.

1 12. Unless a parent has been denied custody rights pursuant to this section or visitation
2 rights under section 452.400, both parents shall have access to records and information pertaining to
3 a minor child including, but not limited to, medical, dental, and school records. If the parent
4 without custody has been granted restricted or supervised visitation because the court has found that
5 the parent with custody or any child has been the victim of domestic violence, as defined in section
6 455.010, by the parent without custody, the court may order that the reports and records made
7 available pursuant to this subsection not include the address of the parent with custody or the child.
8 Unless a parent has been denied custody rights pursuant to this section or visitation rights under
9 section 452.400, any judgment of dissolution or other applicable court order shall specifically allow
10 both parents access to such records and reports.

11 13. Except as otherwise precluded by state or federal law, if any individual, professional,
12 public or private institution or organization denies access or fails to provide or disclose any and all
13 records and information, including, but not limited to, past and present dental, medical and school
14 records pertaining to a minor child, to either parent upon the written request of such parent, the
15 court shall, upon its finding that the individual, professional, public or private institution or
16 organization denied such request without good cause, order that party to comply immediately with
17 such request and to pay to the prevailing party all costs incurred, including, but not limited to,
18 attorney's fees and court costs associated with obtaining the requested information.

19 14. An award of joint custody does not preclude an award of child support pursuant to
20 section 452.340 and applicable supreme court rules. The court shall consider the factors contained
21 in section 452.340 and applicable supreme court rules in determining an amount reasonable or
22 necessary for the support of the child.

23 15. If the court finds that domestic violence or abuse as defined in section 455.010 has
24 occurred, the court shall make specific findings of fact to show that the custody or visitation
25 arrangement ordered by the court best protects the child and the parent or other family or household
26 member who is the victim of domestic violence, as defined in section 455.010, and any other
27 children for whom such parent has custodial or visitation rights from any further harm."; and
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29 Further amend said bill by amending the title, enacting clause, and intersectional references
30 accordingly.