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MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 2 October 2007

POLYGRAPHS IN THE FAMILY COURT: WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Ann Bressington, Independent Member of the Legislative Council, is growing ever more anxious about the situation of the Family Court and the reluctance of Judges to put an end to false and misleading statements.

It appears that injustice in the Family Court is an accepted practice and many South Australians, Australians in fact, are being forced to endure judgements made regardless of the consequences.

False and misleading statements in any other court would be called “perjury” and would carry a jail sentence, yet in Family Court it seems that basic human rights, as well as parental rights and responsibilities have been forfeited as has the right to a truly democratic justice system.

Forensic polygraph testing is available to prove the truth and has an accuracy rate of 98%. Polygraph testing has come a long way over the years and are used in a number of ways to prove false allegations. I have commissioned 6 polygraph tests for parents who have been falsely accused of sexual abuse, domestic violence, neglect and substance abuse and all showed a 98% surety of being innocent of those allegations.

The issues of Family Court such as shared parenting and fitness to parent are emotive issues. So emotive in fact, that so many working the area of child protection and family court allow their personal experiences and biases to cloud the issues. The social workers make recommendations and the judges follow those recommendations, often without question. Let us also not forget the Family Court Lawyers who represent until the money runs out, leaving many parents without representation at trial, or failing to present all of the evidence because time and dollars are short. So let’s take the emotion out of issue and allow a totally unbiased, scientifically proven method to determine the truth.

In South Australia a forum of parenthood groups met on Friday, 28th September, 2007 to discuss the possible use of polygraphs and with 9 organizations represented from both genders and deliberations that lasted for 6 hours, the answer came back a resounding “yes” to polygraphs being used before cases are ever referred to the Family Court.

I am wanting feedback from Australians and those of you who live in other countries:-

- **Would you take a polygraph to prove your innocence?**
- **Would you be prepared to pay for a polygraph AUD \$1,600 before you go to court?**
- **Do you believe that, if penalties were in place for making false allegations and misleading statements that this behaviour would be halted as a result?**

Polygraphs must be conducted by forensically trained specialists.

