



# 'More Equalized Approach to Child Custody' to Become Law Aug. 28

*Missouri Takes First Step in Supporting Children's Best Interest*

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI, USA, August 18, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- National Parents Organization (NPO) congratulates the Missouri legislature and Gov. Jay Nixon for acting in the best interest of children by signing the state's bill promoting shared parenting into law. Previously known as [HB 1550](#), the law "creates a more equalized approach to child custody and visitation," [according to the Governor's office](#). The change, which takes effect Aug. 28, is based on the overwhelming amount of research showing shared parenting, or 50/50 custody, after divorce is most beneficial for children's health and wellbeing, as well as parental and gender equality.

"Children need and benefit from having both parents actively involved in their lives," said Rep. Kathryn Swan, who supported the bill. "The shared parenting bill is a child-centered bill. It prohibits courts from adopting a cookie-cutter default custody order or plan. Instead, the parent work schedules, residence, location of the school, etc. are determining factors in developing a parenting plan that best meets the needs of the individual child or children."

Prior to the Governor signing the proposal into law, the shared parenting bill unanimously passed the Senate, was supported in the House 154-2 and was studied by a subcommittee led by Patricia Scaglia, chair of The Missouri Bar's Family Law Section.

"Thank you, Gov. Nixon and Missouri legislators, for bringing state child custody laws in line with the latest research showing that most children desperately want and need shared parenting after divorce or separation," said Dr. Ned Holstein, founder of National Parents Organization. "Too many families have suffered from the family courts' outdated preference for giving sole custody to one parent. Instead of setting up parents for a bitter and unnecessary custody battle, shared parenting allows families to heal from the pain of divorce and separation from a position of equality and co-parenting."

By passing the law, Missouri begins to move shared parenting – a flexible arrangement where children spend as close to equal time as possible with each parent, when both parents are fit – from the exception to the norm. In the past couple of years, a handful of states, including Utah, South Dakota and Minnesota, have added laws that encourage shared parenting, and more than 20 states have considered similar proposals.

"As someone who has seen first-hand how our current family court system unnecessarily tears families apart, I see the new law as a first step on the road toward ensuring that all Missouri children thrive when their parents divorce or separate," said mother and grandmother Linda Reutzel, a National Parents Organization of Missouri member. "Once the law is in place, we hope attorneys and judges will stick to the original intent and act in the best interest of children."

## ABOUT NATIONAL PARENTS ORGANIZATION

National Parents Organization, a charitable and educational 501 (c)(3) organization, seeks better lives

for children through family law reform that establishes equal rights and responsibilities for fathers and mothers after divorce or separation. The organization is focused on promoting shared parenting and preserving a child's strong bond with both parents, which is critically important to their emotional, mental, and physical health. In 2014, National Parents Organization released the Shared Parenting Report Card, the first study to rank the states on child custody laws. Visit the National Parents Organization website at [www.nationalparentsorganization.org](http://www.nationalparentsorganization.org).

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