

BOSTON, MA, October 04, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- It appears as if the fathers' rights movement is here to stay. Born out of male frustration that the family law system seemed to favor women, the effort to support fathers' involvement in their children's lives has achieved results. In most states, fathers are given joint legal custody unless the judge has a clear reason to do otherwise.

Despite this, some fathers continue to struggle to have truly shared physical custody. They often feel that child support and alimony awards place them in an impossible financial position without giving them increased access to their children. For these and other reasons, advocates of fathers' rights are not resting on their laurels. They continue to push for equality in parenting, something that many still find elusive.

The impact of the fathers' rights movement can be seen in many aspects of life. It is visible in state and local politics in many jurisdictions. In Virginia, for example, the newly sworn-in attorney general appeared in court in a private case that involved a custody dispute between a state legislator and his ex-wife.

This is not just any custody dispute. The father is the former head of Fathers for Virginia, an organization that seeks to "empower divorced fathers as equal partners in parenting." The legislator is also involved in another group that promotes the notion that men are often the subjects of false domestic abuse complaints.

The attorney general, who is now seeking the governor's office, has been involved with the fathers' rights movement for some time. When he was in the Virginia Senate, he introduced legislation that had the support of national fathers' rights groups. These groups have become involved in the state's politics, encouraging Virginia men to vote for the attorney general in his pursuit of the governor's office.

Another hot button matter related to fathers' rights is the issue of adoption in Indian country. A case in Oklahoma illustrates some of the issues that men face when seeking access to their children. A non-Indian man searched the state trying to find his pregnant Indian girlfriend. What he - and her relatives - did not know was the mother's plan to put the baby up for adoption in South Carolina after the birth.

The father, supported by members of the mother's family, is seeking custody of his daughter. A similar case, known as the Baby Veronica case, also involved an adoption of a baby by a

non-Indian family that was finalized without notifying the birth father or the tribe. This case has received much publicity and has become extremely costly.

Other countries have seen fathers assert themselves, in some cases helped by the legal system. A judge in Israel recently ruled that a father should not be required to pay child support. The man makes less than his ex-wife does, and he shares custody with her. In general, Israeli fathers pay 75 percent of the cost of child-rearing if they share custody. If they do not share custody, the father pays 100 percent.

The case may shake up the way alimony is awarded in Israel. The judge ruled that because the children are with their father half of the time, the man is already paying half the cost of essential support. Because of the income disparity between the two, he would only be obligated to pay a small amount in addition; the judge determined that this should be waived.

And what of fathers in Massachusetts? There are law firms in the Commonwealth that specialize in representing fathers during divorces or custody disputes. There are numerous websites that offer advice and resources especially for Bay State fathers, including news stories and targeted advertisements. There are support groups for divorced dads. There are even special services for children whose fathers have custody. Fathers in search of support and information need only look as far as the Internet.

Massachusetts Family Law Group is a statewide family law firm offering clients aggressive and cost-effective representation in divorce, alimony, child custody and child support.