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No one can be everywhere at once. And you can't be at home, teaching your children, while monitoring Congress and state legislatures. Through electronic legislative services, HSLDA is monitoring legislation for you—watching and listening carefully for any proposed laws that could erode your freedom.

Join HSLDA today—we'll watch out for your future. We also provide 24/7 legal assistance and some great money-saving benefits!

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Action Needed on Third-Party Visitation Bill

Dear HSLDA Members and Friends:

The Washington legislature is about to open on Monday, January 9. Many bills have already been pre-filed for the 2012 legislative year, and we are already tracking several of them.

One of those bills is a "third party visitation bill" that would allow any person who "has established an ongoing and substantial relationship with the child" to petition the court to allow them to have visitation rights with that child—even if the parents object.

We need you to contact the House Judiciary Committee now and voice your opposition to the bill.

While House Bill 2193 is not a "homeschool" bill, it has the potential to negatively impact parental rights in Washington. Under House Bill 2193 any single parent or married couple who are temporarily living apart (for instance, due to a job or for financial reasons) could face the threat of a petition for third-party visitation.

Additionally, anyone who could show he had a relationship with the child for at least one year through interaction, companionship, and mutuality could petition the court for visitation rights. There would be no requirement that the person be related to the child.

We believe House Bill 2193 should be strongly opposed as a threat to parental rights.

While the Washington legislature has not officially opened, a public hearing has been scheduled for January 11 at 8:00 a.m. in the House Judiciary Committee. An executive session has also been scheduled in the Judiciary Committee on January 12 at 10:00 a.m. Committee members often vote on the bill in executive session, so we are very concerned that House Bill 2193 is being pushed on a fast track. We need your calls and emails now to help stop this bill!



House Bill 2193 could negatively impact parental rights in Washington.

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The HSLDA [Curriculum Market](#) is buzzing with activity! Save money on new and used homeschooling materials, or sell your extras.

You Can Help!

The Home School Foundation supports homeschool families in need. Whether it's a widow or a family suffering after a natural disaster, HSF is there to help. You can [give directly](#), or through our Clicks For Homeschooling program; online merchants contribute to HSF when you shop!

Start [shopping here to contribute to HSF at no cost to you!](#)

Some of you may remember that similar bills have been introduced in the past few years, but with your calls they were defeated. We need your calls and emails once again. Please contact the legislators listed below and urge them to defeat this bill.

Action Requested

1) Please call and email the House Judiciary Committee members listed below and give them this message in your own words:

"Please oppose House Bill 2193. This bill interferes with parents' fundamental right to direct the care, custody, and control of their children. No parents should have to have their parental decision on who visits their children challenged court. Allowing any person who has formed a relationship with the child and family to be able to petition the court for visitation rights is outrageous.

Additionally, this bill would allow courts to determine visitation in situations where the family is still intact, jeopardizing family integrity. Please vote against House Bill 2193 and ensure that it is defeated."

You do not need to identify yourself as a homeschooler; instead you can identify yourself as a concerned parent and taxpayer. Please let the legislator know if you are in their district.

House Judiciary Committee Members

Rep. Jamie Pedersen—Chair (D) (sponsor of HB 2193)

Phone: (360) 786-782

Email: Jamie.Pedersen@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Roger Goodman—Vice Chair (D) (sponsor of HB 2193)

Phone: (360) 786-7878

Email: Roger.Goodman@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Jay Rodne (R)

Phone: (360) 786-7852

Email: Jay.Rodne@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Matt Shea (R)

Phone: (360) 786-7984

Email: Matt.Shea@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Bruce Chandler (R)

Phone: (360)786-7960

Email: Bruce.Chandler@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Deb Eddy (D) (sponsor of HB 2193)

Phone: (360) 786-7848

Email: Deb.Eddy@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Drew Hanson (D)
Phone: (360) 786-7842
Email: Drew.Hansen@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Steve Kirby (D)
Phone: (360) 786-7996
Email: Steve.Kirby@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Brad Klippert (R)
Phone: (360) 786-7882
Email: Brad.Klippert@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Terry Nealey (R) (sponsor of HB 2193)
Phone: (360) 786-7828
Email: Terry.Nealey@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Tina Orwall (D) (sponsor of HB 2193)
Phone: (360) 786-7834
Email: Tina.Orwall@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Ann Rivers (R) (sponsor of HB 2193)
Phone: (360) 786-7850
Email: Ann.Rivers@leg.wa.gov

Rep. Mary Helen Roberts (D) (sponsor of HB 2193)
Phone: (360) 786-7950
Email: MaryHelen.Roberts@leg.wa.gov

Background

Over the years, HSLDA has represented member families in conflict with grandparents and other relatives who did not like homeschooling. These relatives would occasionally try to stop the homeschooling through various means, including turning the family over to child welfare services. Thankfully, most grandparents we encounter at HSLDA support homeschooling and in some situations even participate in the teaching.

However, **House Bill 2193 would allow any third party to sue the parent for visitation rights.** If this bill becomes law, a person could petition the court for visitation rights when both parents are together and not only when there is a pending dissolution, legal separation, or modification of a parenting plan proceeding.

On the surface these bills appear to protect parents' rights by acknowledging that the decision of a fit parent is presumed to be in the child's best interest. However, the petitioner is only required to demonstrate that he or she had a "significant relationship" with the child and that the child would likely suffer harm or substantial risk of harm if visitation with the third party is not awarded. This places the court in the position of deciding whether the parent was justified in limiting contact with the third party.

House Bill 2193 is identical to a bill that was introduced back in the 2010 legislative session, House Bill 2421. With your calls in opposition and the hard work of people on the ground, that bill was defeated. Please contact the legislators listed above to help us defeat this bill once again.

We greatly value you and your support—it is a privilege to serve you! If you or someone you know is not a member of HSLDA, will you consider taking a moment today to join or recommend us and support our work defending individual families threatened by government officials and protecting homeschooling freedom for all? [Join now >>](#)

If you would like to be put on our free email list to receive vital e-letters you may [sign up online](#).

Thank you for your part in fighting for freedom in Washington!

Sincerely,

Thomas J. (Tj) Schmidt
HSLDA Staff Attorney

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How Many of Your Friends Would Pay Your Legal Fees?

As a member of HSLDA, you have 80,000 families standing with you to protect and advance homeschool freedoms in the United States and foreign countries.

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