

Minority Report – 2022 Republican Party Platform Committee

We the below signed offer the following Minority Report pursuant to RPT Rule 24

We offer the following substitution to the “Equal Parenting” plank, and making it a more child centered plank titled, “Children First Parenting”. We wish to strike the following language:

~~—“Equal Parenting We support legislation providing for equal and consistent parenting (— possession and access) for every child, when both parents are fit, willing, and able, as it is in the best interest of the child.”~~

We wish to replace the aforementioned language with the following:

“Children First Parenting: Upon a divorce filing where a parent child relationship exists, we support legislation requiring an automatic referral to mediation prior to a hearing for final orders in order to make every effort to adopt a collaborative approach to parenting that is in the best interest of the children. Except in cases;

- a) Where there has been finding of family violence or a history/pattern of family violence*
- b) Where the Department of Family & Protective Services is a party to the suit*
- c) The court, after a hearing, sustains an objection to mediation on the grounds of notable sexual impropriety or emotional or physical abuse”*

What we are doing with an equal parenting plank, as currently written, is stating that abuse from one party of a family suit effecting a child is more or less important than the other. Not saying something is also saying that. We have heard many stories about a father being stripped of his time with his children. We have also heard many stories of women who are abuse victims, stay at home mothers, or some other case were a mother was stripped of her time with her children or forced to parent with said abuser or where a child is used as a pawn by a parent. Family law is not a one size fit issue, its very difficult, subjective, and situational. Our family law system is broken, without question. That brokenness spans all demographics. I have extreme confidence in saying that there is no demographic (Father, Mother, and Child) that is unharmed by our broken system. I think the goal for our platform is to highlight brokenness within systems and encourage cohesion and uniformity with our values. Given the unique and very wide and subjective nature of family law matters, I think this amended plank, based on testimony, would be more in-line with the family-first and personal responsibility nature of our platform. Divorce is nasty, regardless of who filed first, or is perceived to be right or wrong. What we need more than anything, is for parents to maturely set aside their individual differences and be encouraged to do what is right for the children rather than encourage more contention.

Encouraging maturity on both sides prior to final orders being issued is a much better option than risking even more controversy and abuse. The language we the undersigned presented has a higher likelihood of solving the issues of the people that brought this plank to the committee.

//Signed//

Zach Maxwell, SD22, Jason Vaughn, SD13, Franklin Hill, SD23, David Westbrook, SD26, Gerald Yezak, SD5, William Ely, SD07, Dave Gebhart, SD09, Derrick Wilson, SD10