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September 17, 2013

**Judicial Council of California
Administrative Office of the Courts
Attn: Invitations to Comment
455 Golden Gate Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102-3688**

I am writing in support of the current Judicial Council sponsored legislation LEG13-08, to amend restraining order statutes to clarify procedures for continuance of hearings.

As it is well known and widely criticized; the restraining order process in California has been abused, misused, exploited and manipulated so frequently that it does not resemble anything close to the original legislative intent. One of the many abuses is the intentional delay of hearings when a temporary order has been issued.

One of the most heartbreaking aspects of restraining order abuse is the emotional and psychological abuse experienced by children and affected parents; commonly referred to as a Parental Alienation dynamic. The level of emotional and psychological abuse suffered by children and affected parents is rampant and out of control. It can be reduced significantly virtually overnight if civil and criminal sanctions are enforced against false accusers and those who enable them; many who are family law attorneys who use this process to gain a tactical advantage in a family law case. There is a direct connection between those who obtain false restraining orders, and those who engage in some level of parental alienation.

The abuse of the restraining order process has morphed to include its misapplication in many other areas, such as business disputes and a variety of civil actions. Recent surveys reveal that restraining orders are used in over half of all divorce cases with nearly 90% involving no actual intimate partner violence or threat of violence, but are obtained for convenience purposes, and to gain control of assets, homes, and to obtain sole custody of children in contentious divorces.

Reforms to the restraining order process are long overdue. One simple solution; enacting legislation to provide civil and/or criminal sanctions to those who procure, solicit, encourage, or facilitate false restraining orders or who otherwise manipulate the system, such as delaying timely hearings. The evidence is staggering and overwhelming, and has been for years that many areas of restraining order law are abused not only by petitioners, but also by many family law attorneys as well.

Therefore, I support this proposal, and look forward to future proposals in order to bring a level of sanity and common sense back into this process. Hopefully this will reduce the preventable toil, turmoil, and emotional devastation experienced by children, affected parents, and others who unfortunately happen to be on the receiving end of a civil court process that can entirely change their lives forever; that requires no proof, and provides no sanctions for those who abuse and manipulate this process.

Sincerely & Respectfully

Michael Conzachi

**Director of Legislative Activities & Advocacy
International Support Network for Alienated Families**