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The Truth is Worth Fighting For

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CALIFORNIA JUDGE ACCUSED OF VIOLATING CHILD PROTECTION LAW

The California Senator who authored the California law designed to protect children from abusive family courts across the state is sounding the alarm after complaints about San Diego Superior Court Judge Renee Stackhouse.

“We expect the law to be followed in every California courtroom,” said State Senator Susan Rubio, a survivor of domestic violence herself. “What has been brought forward is alarming.”

The comments surround the custody battle over two children, ages 6 and 7, who have always lived with their mother, Courtney Clifford in Phoenix, Arizona.

Despite hair raising audio tapes documenting the kid’s fear of going with their father, Judge Stackhouse has recently ordered the children taken from the mom permanently and given to the oft absent Bryan Mineo in San Diego. The reunification will involve Mineo’s parents, who the kids have rarely met.

Mineo has been described as a “con man” who once cheated the Make-A-Wish Foundation by raising money to swim the English Channel. He allegedly took the money and never fulfilled his promise.

Mineo deserted the children after the birth of his son, often for several months at a time, including a move to the Cayman Islands without even telling the children. He approved the move of the children to Phoenix years ago.

The case has also involved allegations of physical abuse. Mineo returned his daughter once with an untreated broken leg. The children complained he made them eat dirt.

It is too late for him, but Clifford’s father Michael says families should do background checks on the men who want to marry their daughters.

“I hired three private investigators, and we found an incredible pattern of a grifter going from city to city, preying on women, draining their bank accounts, putting on phony charity events. He is a loser.”

Critics say Stackhouse is relying on junk science to accuse the mom of “parental alienation” of Mineo, supposedly brainwashing the children. The attempted reunification with the father appears to run afoul of the intent of Piqui’s Law, passed in 2023 to prohibit family courts from ordering highly traumatic reunification treatments.

Piqui’s Law is named after 5-year-old Aramazd “Piqui” Andressian, Jr, who was murdered by his father in 2017 during a custody dispute.

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“I remain committed to ensuring that the protections created in his memory are meaningful for every child and family who enters a California courtroom,” Rubio said in response to the ongoing investigation by Dolcefino Media, a Houston based firm specializing in family court corruption investigations across the country.

“Removing children from the mom they want to be with to the parent who abandoned them for much of their life but suddenly wants to play dad again years later is cruel,” said Wayne Dolcefino, President of Dolcefino Media. “I call it parental alienation insanity, and this is not the first complaint we have received from women facing custody fights in her court.”

The investigation has raised collusion allegations. Judge Renee Stackhouse, Mineo’s attorney Catie Young, and Erica Bloom, the appointed counsel for the children, all graduated within a few years of each other from the same controversial San Diego law school Thomas Jefferson School of Law.

That school has lost its American Bar Association accreditation and has faced accusations it is little more than a diploma mill.

Stackhouse, appointed by Governor Newsom, says she became a family judge because of her personal experiences. Stackhouse was abandoned by her mother and raised by grandparents.

Several states, including California and Arizona have already banned reunification camps, but some judges and therapists are trying to circumvent the laws, by suggesting a custody change that will then lead to reunification programs after the fact.

The use of reunification camps to counter alleged parental alienation is one of the most controversial issues in custody cases across the country.

“When parental alienation is used, 90 percent of the time, it is to counter an allegation of abuse, and it is often used to excuse abuse. And I think that is what is happening here, says Michael Volpe, an investigative journalist who has been highlighting the Mineo case for five years.