



Veteran Litigators Wage War on Violation of Veterans' Rights

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CHICAGO, Nov 10, 2009 /PRNewswire via COMTEX/ -- Fathers' Rights attorneys Jeffery Leving, James Hagler, SFC (USA-ret), and Andrey Filipowicz, of the Law Offices of Jeffery M. Leving, Ltd., are delivering their critical assessment of federal custody laws and their impact on the morale of Active Duty parents to Major General John Campbell at the Union League of Chicago's Veterans Day breakfast tomorrow. Major General Campbell will lead the 101st Division into combat next year in Afghanistan.

Currently, servicemembers returning home to custody battles receive little or no institutional support. Military courts and attorneys cannot handle cases outside the military system and civil laws don't adequately protect military parents from actions made by their spouses during deployment. An amendment to the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act prohibiting spouses of active duty military personnel from permanently moving children to another state, without permission of a court or the military spouse, would legally protect servicemembers and their children. According to Leving, such an amendment is badly needed.

"We should do more than display flags and watch parades; we should ensure that servicemembers' rights are protected while they are protecting ours," says Leving, "Those serving our country have state-of-the-art equipment to defend against foreign enemies, but during deployment they often become targets of complicated legal weaponry aimed directly at their children." With most military deployments lasting at least six months, military spouses can legally move children to another state, establish residency, and gain advantage in that state's divorce courts before the deployed parent even returns home.

"Servicemembers often have travel restrictions and financial constraints, making it difficult to visit their children in another state, let alone fight for parental rights," adds Hagler. "Military and Civilian Bars must develop better relationships to assist deployed military personnel with family law matters." Jeffery M. Leving, James Hagler and Andrey Filipowicz take pride in securing justice for fathers returning from military service, as with Timothy Walsh, who won full custody of his son after a bitter battle where his combat experience and resulting Post Traumatic Stress Disorder were used unsuccessfully as ammunition against him. When veterans return home from deployment, they should not find themselves fighting for equal protection and due process under the law.