

# OM'S LAW

## HB 272 Child Custody Proceedings Amendments

(Rep. Cutler, Sen. McKell)



### OM'S STORY

Om's law is named after a 16-year-old boy from Utah, **OM MOSES GANDHI**, who was murdered by his father on *Mother's Day weekend 2023*, during *court-ordered, unsupervised parent time*. Despite 14 years of his mother's warnings to the court of his father's domestic violence, threats, coercive control, drug and alcohol addictions, and sexual assault history, Om was senselessly killed.

OM ISN'T ALONE. Each year, **too many children are court-ordered into custody and parent time with an abusive parent without safeguards in place**. *Unsafe parents* regularly use the family court system to harm children, often with little oversight and at great expense. **HB272 changes that. It's our responsibility to protect Utah children.**

### #1 CHILD SAFETY FIRST

**Elevate child safety as the FIRST priority of custody and parenting.**

Courts must first consider all safety risks, including evidence of domestic violence, in determining children's best interest.

### #2 EXPERT TESTIMONY

**Limit expert testimony in family court to qualified and credentialed professionals.**

Expert evidence in custody and parenting adjudications is subject to evidentiary admissibility standards.

### #3 SAFE THERAPY

**Implement guidance and limits on family court use of reunification treatment.**

Any court-ordered reunification treatment must demonstrate proof of safety, effectiveness, and therapeutic value.

### #4 CHILD ABUSE TRAINING

**Increase training for family court personnel.**

More training to recognize trauma, psychological control, and other signs of abuse when domestic violence is a factor.

### CHILD & FAMILY SAFETY 101

UTAH IS THE **YOUNGEST** STATE IN THE NATION. OVER **25%** OF UTAHNS ARE CHILDREN\*



**ONE IN FIVE** UTAH CHILDREN ARE PHYSICALLY **ABUSED**\*

**1 in 5**

**ONE IN SEVEN** UTAH CHILDREN ARE SEXUALLY **ABUSED**\*

**1 in 7**

**91% OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSERS ARE A PARENT** OR KNOWN ADULT\*



**>30% OF UTAHNS EXPERIENCE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE\***



*"We've made great strides in recognizing domestic violence in our criminal justice system. It's time to do the same in the family court system."*  
**Lt. Governor Deidre Henderson**

*"Family violence in all forms threatens the physical and emotional health of children. Utah courts must recognize danger signs to protect and care for our kids."*  
**American Academy of Pediatrics, Utah Chapter**

*"After following all the rules, the system still failed us. Children deserve better, to live protected."*  
**Om's Mom**

\* Utah HHS, CDC, 2023, US Department of Justice 2023,

