

**Fifty-seventh Legislative Assembly of North Dakota  
In Regular Session Commencing Tuesday, January 9, 2001**

SENATE BILL NO. 2046  
(Legislative Council)  
(Judiciary Committee)

AN ACT to create and enact a new section to chapter 12.1-18 and five new sections to chapter 14-05 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the removal of children from the state, to decrees of separation, and the duty to support children; to amend and reenact sections 14-04-04, 14-05-03, 14-05-08, 14-05-10, 14-05-17, 14-05-23, 14-05-25.1, and 14-09-08 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to decrees of separation and divorce; to repeal sections 14-05-11 and 14-05-12 and chapter 14-06 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to separation from bed and board and grounds for divorce; to provide a penalty; and to declare an emergency.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

**SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 12.1-18 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

**Removal of child from state in violation of custody decree - Penalty.** Any person who intentionally removes, causes the removal of, or detains the person's own child under the age of eighteen years outside this state with the intent to deny another person's rights in violation of an existing custody decree is guilty of a class C felony. Detaining the child outside this state in violation of the custody decree for more than seventy-two hours is prima facie evidence that the person charged intended to violate the custody decree at the time of removal.

**SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-04-04 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**14-04-04. Custody of children.** The court shall award the custody of the children of a marriage annulled on the ground of fraud or force to ~~the innocent parent and also may provide for their education and maintenance out of the property of the guilty a party~~ based upon the best interests and welfare of the child criteria set forth in chapter 14-09.

**SECTION 3.** A new section to chapter 14-05 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

**Grounds for separation.** The court may grant a temporary or permanent decree of separation for any cause for which a divorce may be decreed.

**SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-05-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**14-05-03. Causes for divorce.** Divorces may be granted for any of the following causes:

1. Adultery.
2. Extreme cruelty.
3. Willful desertion.
4. Willful neglect.
5. ~~Habitual intemperance.~~ Abuse of alcohol or controlled substances.
6. Conviction of felony.

- ~~7. Insanity for a period of five years, the insane person having been an inmate of an institution for such period, and affected with any psychosis. No divorce may be granted because of insanity until after a thorough examination of such insane person by three physicians who are recognized authorities on mental diseases, one of which physicians must be the superintendent of the state hospital for the mentally ill, or the chief medical officer of a veterans administration hospital or government institution within or without the state of North Dakota, the other two physicians to be appointed by the court before whom the action is pending, all of whom must agree that such insane person is incurable. No divorce may be granted to any person whose husband or wife is an inmate of an institution, except a United States government hospital or institution, in any other than the state of North Dakota, unless the person applying for such divorce has been a resident of the state of North Dakota for at least five years.~~
8. Irreconcilable differences.

**SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-05-08 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**14-05-08. Habitual intemperance Abuse of alcohol or controlled substances defined.** Habitual intemperance Abuse of alcohol or controlled substances is that degree of intemperance from the use of intoxicating drinks, morphine, opium, chloral, cocaine, or other like narcotic drugs, which disqualifies the person a great portion of the time from properly attending to business, or which reasonably would inflict a course of great mental anguish upon the innocent party. For purposes of this chapter, "controlled substance" means a substance as defined in section 19-03.1-01.

**SECTION 6. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-05-10 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**14-05-10. Denial of divorce.** Divorces must be denied upon showing:

1. ~~Connivance;~~
2. ~~Collusion;~~
3. ~~Condonation; or~~
4. 2. Limitation and lapse of time.

**SECTION 7. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-05-17 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**14-05-17. Residence requirements.** A separation or divorce may not be granted unless the plaintiff in good faith has been a resident of the state for six months next preceding commencement of the action. If the plaintiff has not been a resident of this state for the six months preceding commencement of the action, a separation or divorce may be granted if the plaintiff in good faith has been a resident of this state for the six months immediately preceding entry of the decree of separation or divorce.

**SECTION 8.** Three new sections to chapter 14-05 of the North Dakota Century Code are created and enacted as follows:

**Separation - Spousal support - Division of property.** Upon the granting of a separation, the court may include in the decree an order requiring a party to pay for spousal support and for the support of any minor children of the parties. Subject to section 14-05-24, the decree may also provide for the equitable division of the property and debts of the parties.

**Decree of separation - Effect.** The decree of separation confers upon the parties all the rights of property, business, and contracts as if unmarried and releases both parties from all obligations of maintenance, except as may be required by the decree.

**Revocation of decree of separation - Divorce granted.** At any time after a decree for separation has been granted, the court may revoke the decree based upon any regulations or restrictions the court imposed in the decree. Application for revocation may be made by either party to the decree. The party making the application for revocation shall provide to the other party to the decree at least ten days' and not more than twenty days' notice of the application. Service must be made in the same manner as service of a summons in a civil action. If it appears to the court at the hearing of the application that reconciliation between the parties to the marriage is improbable, the court shall revoke the separation decree and, in lieu of that decree, shall render a decree divorcing the parties. If the court has not previously done so, the court shall provide for the equitable division of the property, shall make orders with respect to any minor children, and may provide for the payment of support to either party by the other.

**SECTION 9. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-05-23 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**14-05-23. Temporary support, attorney fees, and custody.** During any time in which an action for separation or divorce is pending, the court, upon application of a party, may issue an order requiring a party to pay such support as may be necessary for the support of a party and minor children of the parties and for the payment of attorney fees. The court in the order may award custody of minor children to a party. The order may be issued and served in accordance with the North Dakota Rules of Court. The court may include in the order a provision for domestic violence protection provided the party has submitted a verified application for the order which is sufficient to meet the criteria defined in subsection 2 of section 14-07.1-01. A violation of the protection provision of the order is subject to the penalties established in section 14-07.1-06 and the arrest procedures authorized in section 14-07.1-11.

**SECTION 10.** A new section to chapter 14-05 of the North Dakota Century Code is created and enacted as follows:

**Spousal support.** Taking into consideration the circumstances of the parties, the court may require one party to pay spousal support to the other party for any period of time. The court may modify its spousal support orders.

**SECTION 11. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-05-25.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**14-05-25.1. Money judgment to secure division of property enforceable by contempt proceedings - Exemptions from process not available.** Failure to comply with the provisions of a separation or divorce decree relating to distribution of the property of the parties constitutes contempt of court. A party may also execute on a money judgment, and the obligor is entitled only to the absolute exemptions from process set forth in section 28-22-02.

**SECTION 12. AMENDMENT.** Section 14-09-08 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**14-09-08. Mutual duty to support children.** Parents shall give their children support and education suitable to the child's circumstances. The court may compel either or both of the parents to provide for the support of their children.

**SECTION 13. REPEAL.** Sections 14-05-11 and 14-05-12 and chapter 14-06 of the North Dakota Century Code are repealed.

**SECTION 14. EMERGENCY.** Section 1 of this Act is declared to be an emergency measure.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Senate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker of the House

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of the Senate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Clerk of the House

This certifies that the within bill originated in the Senate of the Fifty-seventh Legislative Assembly of North Dakota and is known on the records of that body as Senate Bill No. 2046 and that two-thirds of the members-elect of the Senate voted in favor of said law.

Vote:      Yeas        47            Nays        0            Absent      2

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of the Senate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of the Senate

This certifies that two-thirds of the members-elect of the House of Representatives voted in favor of said law.

Vote:      Yeas        94            Nays        0            Absent      4

\_\_\_\_\_  
Speaker of the House

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Clerk of the House

Received by the Governor at \_\_\_\_\_ M. on \_\_\_\_\_, 2001.

Approved at \_\_\_\_\_ M. on \_\_\_\_\_, 2001.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Governor

Filed in this office this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2001,

at \_\_\_ o'clock \_\_\_\_\_ M.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary of State