

ROBERTO A. BIHAR, PLLC

ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW

6557 HIGHLAND ROAD, STE. A
WATERFORD, MICHIGAN 48327
www.biharlaw.com

TELEPHONE (248) 383-8015
FACSIMILE (248) 751-6081

September 20, 2021

Honorable Graham Filler, Chairman
House Judiciary Committee
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Re: House Bills 4847-4850

Dear Representative Filler:

As an attorney practicing in Oakland County who counts on the services of a dwindling pool of professional guardians and conservators, I want to communicate my personal opposition to **House Bills 4847, 4848, 4849, and 4850**.

The entire guardianship system will collapse if this legislation becomes law. Professional guardians and conservators play a critical role in caring for the most vulnerable people in our state. Therefore, I cannot support these bills. Please hold the bills in your committee until they can be amended to reform this safety net.

Before we throw up additional barriers for these dedicated public servants, the Michigan Legislature should be looking at a funding mechanism to pay professional guardians for the services they already provide. Professional guardians serve as many as 5,000 indigent people in Michigan without compensation. Instead of funding professional guardians in a fashion like lawyers for indigent criminal defendants, the State of Michigan asks professional guardians to work for free. Now this legislative package will make their jobs even harder, without providing one cent of state funding to support their work. Professional guardians are no less of a valuable part of Michigan's judicial system than court appointed lawyers for criminal defendants.

Representative Filler, you are an attorney, so imagine if the state told you how many clients you could work with while not paying you for 30-60 percent of your cases. That is not a sustainable business model, yet the State of Michigan demands this from our professional guardians.

These bills are not a reasonable solution to address any problems within the system.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Roberto A. Bihar, Esq.