

September 17th, 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:

Michigan has long counted on the services of a dwindling pool of professional court-appointed guardians, yet before you are bills that would make the fragile system, worse, not better. I must communicate my strong opposition to **House Bills 4847, 4848, 4849, and 4850**.

I currently work for a guardianship company in Wayne County. When I decided to pursue my degree in Social Work, I did not pursue this field for the money. I pursued this field to make a change and help improve the lives of underserved and vulnerable individuals. These bills will allow these individuals to become vulnerable to themselves but potential family members that were previously neglecting and exploiting them. As case managers at the guardianship agency, we keep these individuals safe. We ensure they have adequate placement, services, and connect them to proper resources to enrich and improve their lives.

I recently came across a case with an individual who was being financially exploited, neglected, and abused by their children. This individual was living in a situation where there were no utilities, water, food, and was sitting in their bodily fluid. If we were not appointed guardians to get this individual out of their home, into proper placement, and seen by medical professionals, the situation could have escalated into an unsettling outcome. If guardianship companies are limited to helping individuals like this one, this leaves them vulnerable in the hands of their abusers.

There are times where I lie awake at night concerned about my clients. I am not just concerned about these individuals between the hours of 8-5 Monday-Friday. I am concerned about these individuals 24/7, 365 days a year. If these bills go through, the well-being of my clients will be compromised. If there is anything to consider while thinking about putting these bills through, think about the individuals who have been abused or exploited by family, think about the individuals who have nobody, and think of the people who suffer from severe mental illness who need guidance and assistance in their lives. These are the people to consider when thinking about these bills. If public guardianship agencies are not the ones helping these individuals, who will? I think that is a question that should be in everyone's mind when these bills are discussed.

Representative Filler, these bills are not a solution any problems within the system and should not move forward. Please do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Jaimee Reyes

