

Al Rice's COMMENTS submitted in HB 5724 Hearing on June 5, 2024

1. We only "In Part" SUPPORT HB 5724.
2. All Judges are elected officials and they are subject to public scrutiny. This includes "public posting or display of covered information and actions of the judge, and/or by the judge." This bill appears to allow a judge to challenge and trample Wards, Litigants and their families' Freedom of Speech. All Litigants, Plaintiffs and Defendants in all courts must have their Freedom of Speech protected and preserved.
3. We wholeheartedly support protecting the judge's immediate family members.
4. Specifically, for starters, it is recommended that:
On page 4, line 16, "judge or the" be removed.
On page 6, lines 21 - 29, be removed.
On page 7, line 1, Sec. 8., the word "liberally" be removed.
On page 7, line 5, Sec. 8., the word "broadly" be removed.
5. Is page 7, Sec. 8., really needed? All Michigan judges now have the ability to rule "contempt" charges on anyone, and they can threaten and jail any and all Litigants, Plaintiffs and Defendants in all courts at will, now.
6. And, just as important and/or more importantly, we all wholeheartedly SUPPORT a joint MI House Bill & MI Senate Bill that "protects the physical & financial safety of Wards, Litigants & their families from predatory Judges & Attorneys & professional Guardians that prey on Seniors in Probate Court.
7. Remember that Head of Michigan Attorney General's Elder Abuse Task Force and AGO Department's Financial Crimes Division Scott Teter stated, **"We don't know how to handle financial exploitation cases, we just don't, it's a huge crime."**
8. Remember that Michigan Senator Ruth Johnson stated, **"I've have probably received more complaints about Probate Court than anything else,** since I was elected to the Senate."
Senator Ruth Johnson states further on the record - In **"SE Michigan, I have concerns, about the Courts - not always following the rules and laws that are put in place to protect vulnerable people."** **"But we need to fix a core problem we have in our courts."** "But there are problems within the system that are real. How do we fix that?"