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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:

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 as they are written.

I have been a professional guardian since 1992 and I am certified through the National Guardianship Association. My agency works in 11 Michigan counties because many of the rural counties do not have other professional guardian agencies to choose from to act on behalf of individuals that have no other options. We are a last resort!

As a last resort guardian, we have residents placed as far as a 5-hour drive because of a lack of available licensed facilities for mentally ill behavior problems. Some of these individuals are very mentally ill and do not even want to visit or are not home when we arrive. If monthly visits are required, we would have to drive back every day until we find them at home. It would be nice if the majority of our case load were all in one place to make visits more convenient but that is not the real world and only 10% of our caseload are in nursing homes. If we are required to perform monthly visits, I will no longer be able to provide services to those individuals and who is going to take them on with no pay?


Having been a reliable and stable agency over the years we have absorbed hundreds of clients from other individuals and agencies that have either gotten in trouble and closed down or gotten out of the business because there is no compensation other than what we can charge private pay to help cover the costs of our caseload that have no funds to pay for services. 99% of our caseload is indigent and on Medicaid.

Not only are we not getting paid for 40% of our clients but we have to pay employees to work just to visit and serve our wards. The proposed bills will triple our work that we already do for free.

These bills require for a guardian to be certified however there is no certification process in place and I cannot agree to certification when we do not know what that is going to consist of.

If these bills move forward our agency will not survive and will leave another 11 counties without professional services that could otherwise make a huge difference in a vulnerable adult's life.

Sincerely,



Rana Lechlitter Kruger, BA, NCG
Nationally Certified Guardian