

The California Sibling Leadership Network  
info@californiasibs.org



May 14, 2018

Honorable Xavier Becerra  
Candidate for Attorney General  
777 S Figueroa Street, Suite 4050  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Dear Candidate Becerra,

We would like to request that the candidates for Attorney General for the State of California meet with The Spectrum Institute, Disability & Guardianship Project and Disability & Abuse Project to discuss the long overdue need for conservatorship reform.

There are tens of thousands of adult dependents; seniors and those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, who find themselves entangled in the probate conservatorship proceedings who are victims of civil rights violations. It has been proven true that judges oftentimes ignore the Americans with Disabilities Act in these cases, sometimes not even appointing an attorney to defend the rights of the respondent. Court appointed attorneys are often surrendering, rather than defending, the rights of their clients. Court investigators all too often are not monitoring these cases adequately or they are not effectively responding to reports of abuse. Capacity assessments are often not performed at all with respect to many areas of decision-making and when they are done, individuals who lack the necessary qualifications or training for such an evaluation are conducting them.

In 2014 there was an original request and in 2017 there was a follow-up request, to the Attorney General at the time, to investigate or have some involvement to deal with these civil rights violations. There has never been a face-to-face meeting with any representative of the Department of Justice. We have been told that the Attorney General is loyal to the state agencies and officials who are allowing these civil rights violations to occur; thereby not being able to take any action.

We are asking you, a candidate for Attorney General to 1) convene a civil rights summit on probate conservatorship to address these issues on a state-wide basis; and 2) following the summit to convene a Civil Rights Task Force on Probate Conservatorships to identify the prevalence of civil rights violations in such proceedings, to determine the extent to which



these violations stem from systemic deficiencies in policies and practices; and to identify ways to better protect the civil rights of persons involved in such proceedings.

We respectfully request that you meet with the Spectrum Institute in the interest of protecting the civil rights of adult dependents; seniors and those with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the State of California.

Contact:

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Thank you for attention to this matter.

Regards,



Julie Neward, President & Co-Founder  
Chair, Public Policy Committee  
The California Sibling Leadership Network  
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**About The California Sibling Leadership Network:** Our Mission is to partner with CaliforniaSibs (sisters and brothers of individuals with special needs) in finding and creating information, community support and advocacy tools to advance issues important to them and their entire families.

Find us at:  
Website: [www.CaliforniaSibs.org](http://www.CaliforniaSibs.org)  
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cc: Thomas Coleman

