



February 4, 2019

TO: Senator Prozanski, Chair, Senate Committee on Judiciary and Committee Members

From: Cheryl Cisneros, Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: Support for SB 376 relating to Guardianship

Chair Prozanski and Members of the Committee:

People are most successful when they have choice and control of their lives.

My experience begins as the parent, legal guardian and conservator of a 26-year-old man who experiences developmental disabilities. I also worked for many months as a corporate guardian representative and for the past several years I have been working directly with families of children and adults with developmental disabilities as the Executive Director for the Regional Family Network in Marion, Polk & Yamhill Counties. I am also proud to represent the Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition today as I urge support for Senate Bill 376.

This bill provides additional protection to ensure that legal guardians provide notice of appointment which is important because everyone deserves to be fully informed when key decisions are being made on their behalf.

The bill directs the court to order the guardian to file a motion for the guardianship to be reconsidered if the annual guardian's report indicates that guardianship should not continue or fails to support the continuing need for guardianship. This adds an automatic action step to the current process to ensure that there is an opportunity to restore the rights that have been limited by guardianship. Guardianship should only continue if absolutely necessary.



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The bill also directs the court to order a hearing if a guardian fails to comply with the court order and directs the court to ensure necessary notifications are made. This change to the statute would provide extra protection so that guardians do not abuse their power and retain unnecessary control over another person's life.

We all deserve to live our lives to the fullest in a way that honors our personal preferences. Guardians should take active steps to ensure that the person under guardianship is involved in decisions about their life, and have their rights restored at the earliest opportunity when possible.

On behalf of the Oregon Developmental Disabilities Coalition which is a group comprised of dozens of organizations, self-advocates and families across state that promote quality services, equality and community integration for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities, I urge you to support Senate Bill 376.

Thank you for your consideration of this needed legislation.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Cisneros