



FLORIDA STATE GUARDIANSHIP ASSOCIATION

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November 5, 2021

Honorable Ken Burke, Pinellas County Clerk & Comptroller
Clerks' Guardianship Improvement Task Force
Clearwater Courthouse
315 Court Street, Room 400
Clearwater, FL 33756

RE: Comments requested on the Task Force report

Dear Clerk Burke,

The Florida State Guardianship Association stands firmly for education for all guardians, promotes professional excellence in the practice of guardianship and serves as a voice for vulnerable persons.

We appreciate the acknowledgment in the draft report of FSGA's efforts to provide and promote education. Accordingly, FSGA, on record, strongly supports improving continuing education across the board – families and the public, clerk and court personnel, examiners, attorneys, and judges, even health professionals.

FSGA and others expressed concerns at the outset of this process that the task force was not well-aimed to address statewide issues concerning the complexity of guardianship because it was undoubtedly formed in haste. The draft report now confirms the many limitations confronted "because of its limited time and resources." It also admits that presentations and testimony "could not be objectively verified" and that often the information presented "was wholly anecdotal." Questionable references are used, even footnoted, without vetting.

The task force meetings provided few opportunities to provide accurate information or correct the record. Consequently, misunderstandings and misrepresentations of fact and law remain in the draft. Important issues raised by accomplished individuals were overlooked entirely, for example, problems faced daily by individuals involving the recently enacted DNR process.

Despite these omissions, we are pleased the Task Force Report has adopted FSGA's recommendation made several weeks ago to the Governor and legislative leaders to commission an authoritative panel of knowledgeable stakeholders.

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The Florida State Guardianship Association has a solid history of working with other stakeholders to make tangible improvements in and elevating ethical guardianship practices. We fully support meaningful reforms, and we trust a comprehensive approach will produce real and lasting improvements in the guardianship system for all Floridians. We look forward to working with everyone in that endeavor.

Sincerely,



Gina Rossi-Scheiman
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Ron DeSantis, Governor, State of Florida
Honorable Wilton Simpson, President, Florida Senate
Honorable Chris Sprowls, Speaker, Florida House of Representatives

