



Special needs require special attorneys.

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February 27, 2019

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chairman
Special Committee on Aging
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.
Ranking Member
Special Committee on Aging
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Casey:

As the President of the Special Needs Alliance, I write to share our strong support for your work on guardianship issues and specifically your legislative initiative entitled the "Guardianship Accountability Act." The SNA was particularly pleased to have been invited by your staff to participate in discussions about the state of guardianship across the nation. As you know, several of our members met directly with your staff and participated in conference calls about the quality of guardianships, cases where individuals with special needs and older adults may have been harmed through a bad guardianship, model programs, and our work at the state level to improve the use of guardianships and supported decision-making.

We applaud the Special Committee on Aging's hearings on guardianship and your report "Ensuring Trust: Strengthening State Efforts to Overhaul the Guardianship Process and Protect Older Americans." Your leadership at the national level will most certainly help to generate action at the state level.

SNA supports your bipartisan legislation. Your bill will lead to stronger oversight of guardianships and better accountability. By providing incentives for state governments and other stakeholders to work together on systemic problems, there is a greater likelihood of action in the near future. Also, your bill creates a National Online Resource Center on Guardianship, which will educate the key stakeholders, including those who may be subject to guardianships, guardians, and the courts. We believe that your emphasis on data collection, training, and resources on supported decision-making is very important to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and older adults.

Thank you again for including the views of SNA's members in your thoughtful process of legislative development. We look forward to continued engagement as your bill moves forward.

Sincerely,

Robert Fechtman, CELA
2018-2019 President

