

# SEMCIL

SE MN Center for Independent Living, Inc.

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The Honorable Ginny Klevorn  
Chair, State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
551 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Jim Nash  
Republican Lead, State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee  
Minnesota House of Representatives  
203 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: HF 3483 - Guardian Immunity & Task Force

Dear Chair Klevorn, Lead Nash, and Members of State and Local Government Finance and Policy Committee:

As a Center for Independent Living (CIL) that is controlled, led, and managed by people with disabilities since 1981, we ask you to support House File 3483 put forward by Elder Voice Advocates.

SEMCIL has been a witness to and advocated for many who have been subject to the abuse of wrongful guardianship or direct abuse and neglect under both private and professional guardianship. This is not a new issue, but because of community leaders such as Cindy Hagen, we are identifying concerning ways in which people are not only abused by their guardians but also how professionals across systems are working actively to remove decision-making rights, even after previous legislation from 2020 was supposed to redirect people and professionals to supported decision-making options.

In 2023, SEMCIL signed a petition to the Administration on Community Living (ACL) to build a national database on guardianship by state, audit entities such as Areas on Aging, CILs, and other federal grant benefactors, and provide necessary accountability as there is a significant need for gathering and centralizing data, providing quality assurance and improvement to guardianship, and most importantly, there needs to be accountability when significant abuse and neglect occurs. A task force here in Minnesota now will ensure we are proactive in protecting the civil rights of people with disabilities and that when the federal administrations reform, Minnesota will be prepared and a national leader.

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Guardianship in Minnesota, as it currently stands in policy and practice, silences people from their ability to advocate and functionally segregates people from any hope of justice, let alone equal opportunity. Previous legislation provided infrastructure for alternatives, but it did not provide the necessary policy to understand how, when, and where abuse occurs, to what extent, and ultimately provides no accountability for perpetrators of egregious harm.

SEMCIL stands with our most vulnerable community members in demand for thorough study and reform of the guardianship system. We are asking for partnership from you, our representatives. We ask you to support HF3483. Not only does it move away from complete immunity, it contains the task force for necessary discussion on improving our guardianship system, and more importantly, protecting the civil liberty of American citizens. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Rosalie Eisenreich, MPH