



2100 Sawtelle, Suite 204, Los Angeles, CA 90025 • (818) 230-5156
www.disabilityandabuse.org • nora-baladerian@verizon.net

June 1, 2014

Mr. Santi J. Rogers
Director
Department of Developmental Services
P.O. Box 944202
Sacramento, CA 94244-2020

Re: Request for a Meeting

Dear Director Rogers:

The Executive Director of our Project, Dr. Nora J. Baladerian, and I would like to meet with you to discuss the ongoing violation of the rights of people with developmental disabilities by the Limited Conservatorship System in California.

As far as we can tell, the Department of Developmental Services does not play a direct role in the administration of that system, nor does it have any monitoring or oversight responsibility. We believe that when the Limited Conservatorship System was created some 30 years ago, the architects of that system made a serious mistake when they did not include any Executive Branch agency, such as DDS, into its operations, even if only as a monitor or quality assurance auditor. They placed too much confidence in the ability of the judiciary to play too many roles in administering justice for people with developmental disabilities who may need the protections of a limited conservatorship.

We are aware that DDS contracts with Regional Centers to provide and coordinate services for people with developmental disabilities, and awards more than a billion dollars a year for this purpose. It appears that only one small aspect of these services involves limited conservatorships – doing a statutorily mandated assessment about the client's capacity to make various decisions. The Department also awards more than \$19 million per year to Disability Rights California, some of which is used for the Office of Client's Rights. Our preliminary investigation suggests that DRC plays virtually no role in protecting the rights of Regional Center clients when they are threatened or violated by the Limited Conservatorship System.

We have reached out to all seven Regional Centers in Los Angeles County, inviting them to participate in our conferences on the Limited Conservatorship System. We also reached out to several people at DRC. The lack of participation by DRC and the limited participation by only a few Regional Centers suggests to us that violations of the rights of limited conservatees is not in the contract of these agencies with DDS.

I am enclosing a copy of a report we recently issued about the myriad problems with the Limited Conservatorship System. Among those problems is the lack of a role for DDS and DRC and the unduly limited role of the Regional Centers. We believe those roles need to be enhanced.

Our Project is eager to meet with you and your staff to discuss the important matters addressed in *Justice Denied*. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Thomas F. Coleman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

THOMAS F. COLEMAN
Legal Director
(818) 482-4485 / tomcoleman@earthlink.net