



Disability and Abuse Project
Disability and Guardianship Project

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January 29, 2018

Honorable Mary E. Fairhurst
Washington Supreme Court
P.O. Box 40929
Olympia, WA 98504-0929

Re: Follow-up to formal complaint for ADA noncompliance

Dear Chief Justice Fairhurst:

Thank you for acknowledging our formal complaint to the Washington Supreme Court regarding ADA noncompliance by the adult guardianship system in your state. Since the time I received your letter dated December 22, 2017, I have acquired additional information which I think will be useful to the court in evaluating our concerns. I am enclosing several documents for the court's review that underscore the need for systemic changes to the adult guardianship system in Washington State:

1. Commentary: "ADA Title II Guidance from the United States Department of Justice is Instructive to Participants in Washington State's Guardianship System"
2. DOJ Guidance Memo: "Examples and Resources to Support Criminal Justice Entities in Compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act"
3. Letter to Chief Judge of Maryland and excerpts from new rules in that state

The letter to the Chief Judge of Maryland compliments the Court of Appeals for making major improvements in the guardianship system via new court rules on standards and training requirements for court-appointed attorneys. One area of additional improvement is mentioned in that letter.

Finally, I am enclosing materials pertaining to a specific guardianship case in Washington State. We are not asking the court to take any action in the case of Bonnie Jeanne Southall. Rather, this information is being shared with the court in order to provide a specific example of how an ADA noncompliant system can adversely affect a specific individual. It is very unfortunate that a 98-year-old woman is being denied access to justice by the judicial system in Washington State.

Respectfully submitted:

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cc: Washington Supreme Court Justices