

A Public Letter to the American People

We write as parents who saw firsthand the danger of navigating the legal system without basic legal knowledge. After our daughter was harmed by a politically connected family, she was pushed through the courts as an unrepresented minor. An attorney with an undisclosed conflict had me appointed as her Guardian ad Litem despite my lack of legal training, and the court failed to follow the ORCP 27 safeguards meant to protect her.

Her case — unusually — went all the way to a jury trial. Fewer than 5% of civil cases ever reach a jury, yet ours did, without the protection a child deserves. The result was a devastating judgment that shielded those responsible and continues to impact our family today.

Over the next several years, I filed five more cases on her behalf — three in state court and two in federal court — believing I was acting in the role of her appointed GAL. In every proceeding, she again stood as an unrepresented minor. No judge corrected the original procedural failures, and each case was dismissed with prejudice, compounding the harm.

When we protested these injustices — more than 200 peaceful demonstrations — we were charged with crimes. Representing ourselves, we beat those charges, showing how essential legal literacy is for every American. Today, we continue to navigate our federal lawsuit pro se, fighting not only for our daughter, but for the rights of every family entering the courts without support.

No child should be unrepresented.

No parent should be left without legal knowledge.

No family should endure what ours endured.

This is why we are launching **Stand With Stephens: A Movement for Legal Literacy for All Americans**. Every child, parent, and adult deserves access to fundamental legal education — in schools, in communities, and whenever they must face the justice system.

We invite you to stand with us.

Let's build a country where justice is understandable, accessible, and truly available to all.

Stand With Stephens.