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January 17, 2020

Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor, New York State
New York State Capital Building
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo:

I write today to provide enthusiastic support of Guardianship Corp., a not-for-profit organization that is dedicated to representing indigent people in need of guardianship on Long Island. Since its inception in 2018, Guardianship Corp, working with a small paid staff and network of volunteers from the Suffolk County R.S.V.P. (Retired Senior Volunteer Program), has demonstrated its capability to provide high-quality guardianship services to its clients at a small percentage of normal costs.

As a Geriatrician and Palliative Medicine physician who held a public health position in Nassau County and has worked her entire career on Long Island I have seen firsthand how guardianship issues can delay care and have significant impact on our systems - government and health care systems.

The individuals that Guardianship Corp are appointed to by the Court are the most vulnerable members of our communities. All of their cases are from low-to-moderate income status and lack of alternative support systems in the community to ensure their welfare, and are often impacted with Alzheimer's disease, traumatic brain injuries and/or a general decline in cognitive abilities leaving them vulnerable. With a shortage of guardians in Suffolk County, coupled with a senior population significantly aging over the last 20 years, a major public welfare issue is arising. Guardianship Corp is doing its best to bridge a very large gap to ensure all individuals in this position are cared about and monitored for their well-being.

It is my understanding that Guardianship Corp. was originally funded by a Senate Initiative in the 2018/19 New York State budget, and is now providing guardianship services to 40 wards and through their involvement has been able to maintain their quality of life while reducing costs to the health care system. However, they are now in need of sustainable funding to keep up their admirable work. To support the growing caseload into the future, I would like to see on-going funding for this critical program of \$250,000 through fiscal year 2020 - 2021. Without this critical funding, the loss of their capacity would leave helpless individuals in terrible situations. I ask that you support their efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MTC', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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