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## ICARED Press Releases

### Now It's Court Judges Who Are Violating the Law and Abusing Your Grandparents

#### For Immediate Release

**LOS ANGELES, CA (PRWEB) May 24, 2004**— California probate court judges, who receive taxpayer-funded salaries to protect vulnerable seniors from elder abuse, are themselves directly and indirectly responsible for physical, psychological, and financial elder abuse, according to a public education campaign launched today by a public-interest organization advocating on behalf of vulnerable seniors and dependent adults.

ICARED (Improved Court Access & Reform for Elders & Dependent Adults) is exposing the truth about probate judges who spend little time on elder abuse cases, unless they involve wealthy victims and lawyers, and instead continually reschedule hearings to avoid working late and making decisions that may be reversed on appeal. Abusing the essential private judging system that California pioneered, near-retiring judges often use the public courts to cherry-pick the big-money cases to tout themselves as private "rent-a-judges" who earn up to \$10,000 a day to resolve disputes in out-of-court settings for corporations, celebrities, and other high-paying litigants.

According to Martin Kasindorf's "[Rent-a-Judges Forced Out of California Courts](#)," in the April 24, 2003 *USA Today*, Ronald M. George, chief justice of the California Supreme Court, was disturbed by moonlighting judges who were using the public courts to promote themselves for highly lucrative private judging. As a result, George [announced](#) in July 2002 a rule that bars retired judges working on temporary assignment from serving simultaneously as public and private judges.

"Probate judges have the immense power and legal duty to stop perpetrators from continuing to abuse elderly victims, so I know it seems shocking and unbelievable that many of these judges are actually contributing to elder abuse," said Glenn Ackerman, who is ICARED's co-chair and a retired Los Angeles Police Department captain who co-founded LAPD's elder abuse unit. "If anyone had told me five years ago how broken and corrupt the California probate court system is and how it abandons elder abuse victims to the

"When...I discovered that my mother's life savings had been stolen by a relative, my life changed in an instant. For the next five years...my life's work was protecting her and what remained of her estate from a determined, cunning, and resourceful predator...I emerged from the five-year ordeal profoundly disappointed and disillusioned with our judicial system."  
 —Glenn R. Ackerman, Ex-LAPD captain and co-founder of LAPD's Elder Abuse Unit





predators, I would have thought the person was insane or a liar. But after spending five years trying to protect my elderly, disabled mother and her remaining estate from a determined, cunning, and resourceful predator, I emerged from the five-year ordeal profoundly disappointed and disillusioned with our judicial system.”

ICARED is uncovering detailed, unpublished evidence, including actual court filings and transcripts, of probate judges supervising elder abuse cases who:

- Instruct victims’ attorneys to settle out of court with elder abusers so that judges do not have to spend the time that is necessary to protect victims.
- Refuse to spend the time to hear oral testimony and argument substantiating elder abuse claims.
- Fail to spend the time to read court papers filed by attorneys on behalf of victims.
- Dismiss elder abuse lawsuits filed by attorneys on behalf of abused seniors without any notice to the parties, any hearing, or due process of law.
- Fail to issue or enforce protective restraining orders.
- Fail to hold defiant elder abusers in contempt of court.
- Allow litigious elder abusers to drag out costly court proceedings, wear down victims’ attorneys and conservators, and impoverish victims.
- Continue court hearings frequently, giving abusers more time to harm victims.
- Slash the fees awarded to victims’ attorneys, conservators, and indispensable forensic experts (e.g., psychiatrists, social workers, and accountants) to deter them from tying up judges’ calendars with time-consuming elder abuse cases.

ICARED is referring the public to its new website, at [www.ICared.org](http://www.ICared.org), for:

- Evidence of probate judges who try to silence and blackball their critics.
- ICARED-proposed bills in the California Legislature.
- Firsthand personal and professional experiences about actual abuse victims.
- California legislators committed to protecting abuse victims.



- News reporters covering senior and legal issues, the courts, and elder abuse.
- Relevant news articles on elder abuse.
- ICARED's public discussion board.

“Financial abuse of dependent elders not only impoverishes themselves, leaving them dependent on publicly funded programs for survival, but also puts at risk their providing for their heirs as they wish,” said geriatric psychiatrist [REDACTED] an associate clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of California at Los Angeles and a member of ICARED. “As the baby boomers age, the existing epidemic can be expected to grow exponentially. Therefore, our approach to managing these issues now is critical for the future health of Californians and our society. Genuine access to California’s probate courts and the attention there of caring, interested, and fair judges are crucial bedrocks for the protection of vulnerable elders and dependent adults in California.”

#### **About ICARED:**

ICARED (Improved Court Access & Reform for Elders & Dependent Adults) is a public-interest advocacy group of elder care advocates, providers, family members, health care personnel, and legal professionals who are steadfastly dedicated to strengthening and reforming the civil protections guaranteed to California’s vulnerable seniors and dependent adults. Los Angeles-based ICARED is committed to this reform through public education, legislative action, and judicial reforms.

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