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About Us

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.

Loopholes and weaknesses in these protections are allowing for an alarming increase in abuse and neglect. Exploiting mental and physical vulnerabilities of elderly and dependent Californians, predators manipulate the conservatorship system and many probate judges, often with the assistance of counsel. These acts and deficiencies impoverish victims and leave them dependent on publicly funded programs for basic survival.

With firsthand personal and professional experience of this systematic victimization of some of California's most vulnerable citizens, ICARED [members](#) are committed to reform through public education, legislative action, and judicial reforms.

ICARED has proposed several areas of public policy changes to address this burgeoning public problem. Some of ICARED's [proposals](#) have already been introduced as [bills](#) in the California Legislature. Please see, for example, Senate Bill 1305 and Senate Bill 1475, introduced in 2004 by Senator John Vasconcellos (D-Santa Clara).

Some of ICARED's proposals include:

1. Increasing access of non-wealthy seniors and dependent adults to judicial relief, conservatorships, and other protective legal services.
2. Establishing an interagency state council (i.e., a probate ombudsman) led by the California attorney general's office and authorized to:
 - a. Investigate the broken and inefficient

"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

Report
Judicial
Misconduct

Judge
Robert Letteau
Admonished

Probate Judge
Censured and
Barred



- a. Investigate the broken and inefficient probate court system.
 - b. Arrive at local solutions when appropriate.
 - c. Refer cases for civil or criminal prosecution when necessary.
3. Improving reporting and protective services for abused seniors and dependent adults.
 4. Establishing a statewide database of all elder and dependent adult abuse reports encompassing adult protective services (APS) agencies, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Health Services, law enforcement at all levels, and criminal and civil court proceedings involving claims of elder or dependent adult abuse.
 5. Increasing the legal responsibility of attorneys to assess their clients' mental competence when engaged in transfer of assets or estate planning.
 6. Evaluating probate judges' performance in the handling and supervision of elder and dependent adult abuse cases.
 7. Recommending that the Judicial Council of California conduct a survey of judges, probate court staff, senior center workers, APS, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, lawyers, professional conservators and trustees, health care professionals who serve the elderly, and other interested persons to determine the extent to which probate court judges are failing to properly handle and adjudicate in elder and dependent adult abuse cases.

