

Submission after meeting
concluded

Good evening.

My name is Claudia Donnelly. I live in the 41st district and 8th congressional district. I am submitting testimony that I hope you will read and take into account when drawing up new legislative and congressional boundaries. I would like my area moved into a different legislative district – the congressional district can stay the same.

In January, I sent your office a note about how difficult it was to see my state legislators. I talked to David Valiant and he told me to come to this meeting and tell you my story and ask that you move my neighborhood to one where my state legislators actually care about what their constituents say.

Thank you.

Claudia Donnelly

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I live within the PAA of Renton. I have seen Renton officials allow yellow water to flow down a stream to May Creek – and the employees didn't do anything to stop it. I had to go to DOE for help. I saw Renton officials allow building in wetlands – they don't care about protecting the environment. They allow building next to stream and the builder doesn't have to install silt fences to protect the stream. That's why I went to Fish and Wildlife for help.

My mother – who also lived in the 41st district – was a victim of elder abuse and guardian abuse. In 2006, I made an appointment to talk to Rep. Reichert and asked for his help. He couldn't do much. I was also able to get into to see Sen. Fred Jarrett about this topic. I had no problems getting into seeing him.

In 2010, I tried to get state laws changed regarding preventing MRSA infections in nursing homes. Rep. Tom Campbell sponsored a bill that died in committee. I gave up on trying to change state laws regarding guardians.

In July 2010, someone whose mother is a victim of guardian abuse today called me for advice and help. She personally knows some Tacoma state legislators and she was going to talk to them about sponsoring legislation preventing predatory guardian abuse. I figured that I would try and see my state legislators to see if they could help me.

I sent all three of them a note asking for an appointment. After a short period of time, I was able to get in to see Sen. Randy Gordon. He is a law professor in addition to being an attorney. He knew what guardian abuse is/was and said if he was reelected, he would help me in the next legislative session.

I sent a note to Rep. Clibborn and Maxwell asking to meet with them. Rep. Clibborn's office finally said I could see her for 1/2 hour – then she was going on vacation and then had “state business to do”. I decided to wait until after the election.

I never did hear from Rep. Maxwell.

During the summer, Steve Litzow was running for the seat held by Sen. Gordon. He came into my yard one day. I gave him some documents about guardian abuse. He was appalled by what he read and told me if he were elected, I could sit down with him the day after the election and he would write up a bill to be submitted to the legislature.

After the November election, Steve Litzow won. On November 17, I sent him a letter reminding him of what he told me. He never responded. On December 3, the election was certified. He still never responded.

In January, President Obama spoke at a memorial service for Rep. Giffords. He said that one of our rights as citizens was to be able to speak to our elected officials – especially those who represent us in our state legislature.

In late December, I sent all 149 legislators documents and a letter asking to meet with them to talk about guardian abuse. I got responses and met with legislators outside of my district. Trying to meet with my legislators was like pulling teeth. Not one of them responded.

In January, I sent an email asking for an appointment to meet with my 3 legislators. I got a partial note from Sen. Litzow's aide – and then he got back to me. I could meet with Sen. Litzow for 10 minutes the end of January.

Rep. Clibborn's office never responded to my request.

Rep. Maxwell told me that this past summer, her husband died and a daughter got married – and she just didn't like my attitude towards Renton officials – so she decided that she wasn't going to meet with me. Eventually when I did meet with Sen. Litzow, her aide was there.

There were two pieces of legislation that were proposed to protect seniors from predatory guardians. I also asked for legislation to help prevent MRSA infections in nursing homes. I was told that was filed – but I never saw it on the bill digest. All these bills died in committee.

I'm sorry that Rep. Maxwell doesn't like me calling out Renton officials when they don't protect the salmon and other fish in May Creek. This is my neighborhood – and if Renton officials won't stop developers from destroying our environment, I'll go to DOE.

I'm sorry Sen. Litzow didn't want to keep his promise. He made it.

And I'm sorry Rep. Clibborn has so much state business to take care of that she can't possibly see one of her constituents. All I want is to be able to get state laws changed to protect others. Mom is dead, but I want to make sure others aren't treated like she was.

All I want is a district where I can talk to my state leaders – if I want to – and see about changing state laws regarding predatory guardians and unsanitary conditions in nursing homes.