

**Testimony
Department of Human Services
Human Services Committee
Representative Alon Wieland, Chairman
October 25, 2011**

Chairman Wieland, members of the Human Services Committee, I am Jan Engan, Director of the Aging Services Division with the Department of Human Services (DHS). I am here today to provide information about guardianship services made available through the Aging Services Division.

Funds appropriated by the legislature for the purpose of guardianship services for vulnerable adults who are not developmentally disabled are used to assist in petitioning and other related costs. Current biennium funding will allow the Department to assist, at a minimum, with the establishment of 32 guardianships. This number may vary based on actual petitioning costs and the ability to secure pro bono services. In the previous biennium the average cost was \$1,474, rather than the maximum budgeted estimate of \$2,500. Additionally, provisions in 2011 HB 1199 make it possible to provide 16 appointed guardians a modest annual payment of \$500 to assist in offsetting some costs associated with being a guardian. This \$500 payment would continue in year two of the biennium for 32 appointed guardians.

To date this biennium, nine applications have been processed for guardianship. Of this number, one was withdrawn by the case manager, three were denied, and five are approved. Of the five approved for guardianship establishment funds, the individual for whom guardianship was requested are under 60 years of age with a diagnosis of mental

illness or traumatic brain injury, and four of the five proposed guardians requested the \$500 guardianship fee made available through HB 1199.

Thank you. I am available for any questions you may have.