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**CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION**

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January 26, 2022

To: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.  
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee

From: Steven M. Sakamoto-Wengel  
Consumer Protection Division

Re: Senate Bill 8 – Task Force to Study the Need for Enhanced Monitoring of Guardians of  
Vulnerable Minors (SUPPORT)

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The Office of the Attorney General supports Senate Bill 8, sponsored by Senators Kelley, Sydnor, Waldstreicher and West, which would establish a Task Force to study the processes by which the State and local governments currently monitor guardians of vulnerable minors for: (i) mismanagement of the assets and finances of vulnerable minors; (ii) neglect of vulnerable minors; and (iii) abuse of vulnerable minors. The Task Force would make recommendations on whether there is a need for enhanced monitoring of the guardians of vulnerable minors, including any necessary regulatory changes or legislation.

The Office's Consumer Protection Division was given authority by the General Assembly to assist senior citizens and vulnerable adults who have been victims of financial exploitation to recover the assets taken from them. However, there is no comparable program to protect vulnerable minors who have been the victims of financial exploitation by court-appointed guardians. The attorney who handles matters involving financial exploitation of vulnerable adults has been advised of cases in which guardians have financially exploited the minors in their care and the courts have expressed an inability to take meaningful action. We believe that a study of gaps in the protections available to vulnerable minors would be an important step.

Consequently, the Office of the Attorney General requests that the Judicial Proceedings Committee give Senate Bill 8 a favorable report.

cc: The Honorable Delores G. Kelley  
The Honorable Charles Sydnor  
The Honorable Jeff Waldstreicher  
The Honorable Chris West  
Members, Judicial Proceedings Committee