



Written by [Michelle Malkin](#) on June 23, 2021

Blowing the Lid off Probate Predators

There is a silent epidemic in this country claiming the lives and property of untold numbers of innocent elderly and disabled Americans. It has nothing to do with exotic viruses. In fact, it's a homegrown phenomenon involving corrupt elected officials, judges and lawyers.

The deadly disease running rampant in our court system is probate and guardianship abuse.

This week, the granddaughter of the late iconic singer and songwriter Nina Simone blew the whistle on Vice President Kamala Harris' alleged role in a scheme where the entertainer's estate "was taken away from us" after she died in France in 2003. The battle stretched out over 15 years and was reportedly helmed by Harris while she served as California's attorney general between 2011-2017. In a two-part series of shocking tweets, ReAnna Simone Kelly laid out her family's claims about how Harris "threatened my mother Lisa Simone with jail time before the case was underway if my mom didn't resign as the Administrator and Trustee of the estate."

Simone Kelly alleged that Harris, who had no legal jurisdiction over Simone's estate overseas, "put out stories about funds being misappropriated which of course, turned out to be totally false as the money she was talking about was used to pay attorneys, accountants and to protect and run the estate." Eventually, the granddaughter recounted, "the law firm that we initially sued for wrongfully filing the estate in the US probate system, in the end, wound up settling with us for a few million dollars."

Simone Kelly wants answers and is urging people in power (that includes you, fellow journalists!) to "ask Kamala Harris why she came for my family ... Ask her why she separated my family ... Ask her why we as her family no longer own the rights to anything. Ask her why she bullied my mother in court and my mom almost killed herself from the depression."

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If this all sounds bewildering and unimaginable, you haven't been paying attention. Across the country, judges, prosecutors and other legal cronies have been entangled in nightmare cases involving elderly and disabled citizens who've been stripped of their homes, physically and mentally abused, defrauded and often left to die, according to their families.



Gage Skidmore/Wikimedia Commons
Michelle Malkin



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“All across America,” California nurse and activist Patricia Lacy told me, “vulnerable elders are being placed under fraudulent guardian and conservatorships in an effort to obtain a senior’s life savings, property and removal of all their civil rights. They are not even allowed to hire their own attorney but are given a court-appointed attorney, who works in partnership with the opposing party. The guardians, who are supposed to be serving the best interest of the senior, instead use the elder’s money to fight against their advanced directives or wishes. The result is usually the elders losing their homes and being placed in lockdown facilities. If a family member complains, the guardianship playbook calls for a court hearing to claim that the family member is ‘interfering’ and they are then isolated from their loved one.”

Lacy is a member of the National Association to Stop Guardianship Abuse. Her beloved father, Stan Zurko, died at the age of 102 last year after a horrific struggle with a public guardian who separated him from family, hid legal documents from him, and withheld medication and living expenses. Lacy sought help from local and county officials in Ventura County, California, who turned a deaf ear and blind eye. Zurko died in May 2020, barred from moving in with his daughter, and gave up “out of despair that no one would hear him or help him,” Lacy said. “He lost his will to live with so many people in court physically, emotionally and financially harming him, until he just gave up and took his last breath.”

The family’s plight is still not over. Zurko’s assets have been liquidated by the conservators, and Lacy is saddled with \$250,000 in legal bills. The allegation that Harris threatened Nina Simone’s family in the battle over her estate will be very familiar to other families who have faced similar intimidation by the Probate Predator Mafia.

“Many family members have been put in jail under false pretenses just to shut them up. My funds are depleted from paying all the expenses and attorneys’ fees. I have all the documents and validation of the abuse to my father, but I can’t hire an attorney with no funds,” Lacy told me. “This is exactly what these predators do — deplete the family of all funds so they will not be sued.”

The system is rigged. Vulnerable victims have little recourse against a cabal of ruthless thieves and grifters in black robes and three-piece suits. The good news is that families are fighting back and opening eyes. The bad news is that too many establishment journalists are more interested in serving as sycophants to elites than defending the helpless. I’ve asked Kamala Harris’ office for comment on the Probate Predator epidemic. How many others will stand up?

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