

1 TO: THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT - JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

2
3 FROM: PETER T. SZYMONIK

4 GLASTONBURY, CT

5
6 DATE: 10 JANUARY 2017

7 RE: TESTIMONY RE JUDGE JOSE SUAREZ

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9 My name is Peter Szymonik, I am a Polish immigrant and have lived in
10 Connecticut most of my life. I live in Glastonbury with my wife and we have
11 four children between us, two with autism. I have spent most of my career
12 working in or for the legal industry and worked for years at the same law
13 firm which produced Sen. Blumenthal, Justice Bright, former Supreme Court
14 Justice McLachlan and Chief State Justice Rogers. Our law firm prided and
15 distinguished itself on requiring the highest possible level of ethical and
16 professional conduct on the part of partners, attorneys and staff. And this
17 has been a theme throughout my career and in my personal life.

18 I, my wife, and our children, especially our sons with special needs -
19 have been victimized and harmed by the family court system in this state.

20 Our children have been denied the benefit of our parenting to their
21 extreme detriment, the detriment of our family, and to the detriment of our
22 town and state.

23 Our sons have been denied access to us and our parenting for no valid
24 reason or cause and in direct violation of our fundamental civil liberties
25 and constitutional rights as fit, responsible and proper parents.

26 My wife and I are members of the fastest growing civil rights movement
27 in this country - the movement to reform our nation's broken and inherently
28 corrupt family courts - with Connecticut having one of the worst family court

1 system in the country. In support of this statement, please consider that
2 for years, this state's Judiciary has consistently received a grade of "F" in
3 national and non-partisan surveys on judicial accountability.

4 I, along with many parents who are here today, and those who are not
5 here out of fear of retaliation, am here speak against the reappointment of
6 Judge Jose Suarez and to seek his removal from the bench in this state by
7 this committee.

8 Judge Suarez became involved in my family matter in 2015. As Judge
9 Bozzuto did before him, Judge Suarez also ignored motions I filed with the
10 Hartford Family Court to address the ongoing emotional and physical abuse and
11 educational neglect my sons were suffering at the hands of their mother.

12 This included ignoring Emergency Ex Parte motions I filed with the
13 support of the Glastonbury Police, the Glastonbury School System and the
14 Department of Children and Families.

15 Further, Judge Suarez, by his own admission, also completely ignored
16 motions asking him to immediately address flagrant ethical violations on the
17 part of my ex-wife's divorce counsel - Keith Yagaloff.

18 Judge Suarez, completely ignored motions filed with the court in 2015
19 notifying the court that Mr. Yagaloff was unethical entering my ex-wife's
20 home and exploiting my son's autism and his limited capacity to influence the
21 matter before the court.

22 Judge Suarez ignored that Mr. Yagaloff was involving himself and
23 interfering with in my son's school meetings and encouraging my son not to
24 attend school or see his family members - while at the same time attempting
25 to find fault with the Glastonbury School System and myself for a situation
26 of Mr. Yagaloff's own manufacture and my son's lack of school attendance.

27 Judge Suarez ignored (and worked to cover up) Mr. Yagaloff's fraud
28 against the Glastonbury School and fraud before the court.

1 Judge Suarez, ignored that Mr. Yagaloff was even involving himself in
2 my son's medical care and that Mr. Yagaloff attempted to introduce fraudulent
3 medical documents into my son's school file.

4 Judge Suarez ignored that my ex-wife arbitrarily opted to violate every
5 court order entered and ceased transitioning my son with autism to us. That
6 she instead worked diligently to alienate my sons and deny them any access to
7 or contact with their father, their new step-mother, their 83-year old
8 grandmother and their extended family members. All fine with Judge Suarez.

9 Judge Suarez ignored that my teenage son with autism was spending 99%
10 of his free time in his troubled mother's basement - listening to an iPod.

11 Judge Suarez ignored that as part of her agenda and campaign against
12 the Glastonbury School System, my son with autism had skipped over 200 days
13 of school when with his mother as she encouraged him not to attend school and
14 Mr. Yagaloff attempted to force my son to testify against his educators and
15 school system - exposing him to risk of injury given the extreme anxiety this
16 would expose my son to.

17 This cost the Town of Glastonbury well over \$175,000 (and counting) to
18 respond to, and the State of Connecticut hundreds of thousands of dollars as
19 well - as every state agency and institution, including the juvenile Court,
20 questioned why Judge Suarez and the Hartford Family Court were doing
21 absolutely nothing to address these complaints, and Judge Suarez was instead
22 working to endlessly and deny my ability to have these complaints heard.

23 Judge Suarez and the Hartford Court did little more than encourage,
24 promote and enable the ongoing abuse and neglect of my sons, and my son with
25 special needs. This was a perfect example of intentional court sponsored
26 alienation and exploitation of children - Judge Suarez ignored this and
27 worked diligently to cover up Mr. Yagaloff's misconduct while instead trying
28 to fault and blame me when I had no ability to parent or have any access to

1 my sons because of my ex-wife's and Mr. Yagaloff's actions. When never once
2 were there any issues with my son when they enjoyed equal parenting time,
3 when all of the evidence before the court reflected that I was the parent who
4 fully supported my son's school system, provided for the medical care and
5 responsibility involved my ex-wife in the equal parenting of our sons.

6 Judge Suarez continually ignored and dismissed my fundamental civil and
7 constitutional rights as a fit parent, and ignored the fact that federal
8 education, disability and other laws were being flagrantly violated by the
9 state due to his failures and inaction.

10 During hearings, Judge Suarez acted in a hostile and aggressive manner
11 towards me - often mocking me when I explained my experience raising two
12 children with children with autism. Judge Suarez arrogantly proclaiming "You
13 sir, are not an expert in autism." Within five minutes into my taking the
14 stand - he ordered that I be deemed a "hostile witness."

15 Judge Suarez frequently lost his composure on the bench. On at least
16 three occasions - he suddenly stormed off the bench calling for a recess when
17 he lost control of his emotions and composure, a form of judicial
18 intimidation.

19 In November, Judge Suarez responded to my request that he formally
20 declare and uphold my rights as an equal parent under the Constitution by
21 denying my motion without explanation. Instead, he suddenly ordering five
22 days' worth of "endless hearings" for December - a further example of
23 judicial intimidation and abuse. Judges do not schedule hearings - attorneys
24 do with caseflow based on their and their client's availability. Yet Judge
25 Suarez expected and demanded that I and my attorney, a sole practitioner, take
26 a quarter of the month of December off and away from family and work on a
27 whim, not considering the personal and professional implications this imposed
28 on us. Judge Suarez completely ignored notice that my 83-year old mother was

1 in poor health and I needed to tend to her, refusing a one-day continuance
2 without reason or cause.

3 During the course of the hearings, Judge Suarez essentially bragged
4 that evidence of Mr. Yagaloff's misconduct and unethical behavior was "not
5 before his court", as both he and Judge Nastri worked to prevent the
6 admission and proper hearing of recordings of school meetings reflecting Mr.
7 Yagaloff's exploitation and abuse of my autistic son.

8 This past week, in spite of overwhelming evidence against my ex-wife
9 and her divorce counsel, Judge Suarez opted to issue orders stripping me of
10 almost all of my parenting time with my sons, without valid reason or cause
11 of any kind.

12 Finally, Judge Suarez did to me and my autistic son the same thing he
13 did to my wife and her autistic son - when in 2011 he also stripped her of
14 all her parenting time without reason or cause, causing our other son with
15 autism to become nonverbal. Knowing this, Judge Suarez refused to recuse
16 himself from my matter.

17 My experience with Judge Suarez is unfortunately not unique and all of
18 the statements I have made are fully supported by documents and transcripts
19 contained in my court file for those who wish to examine them.

20 When our state judges operate outside of the law, act in open defiance
21 and contempt of state law and the Constitution, and prey on children and
22 families of special needs, they should not be allowed to be or remain judges
23 in this state.

24 Judge Suarez, must not be returned to the bench in this state.
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