

To: tbeat@smcgov.org

Subject: Written Public Comment—Item 3: Family-Court Harm and September 30 Court Watchers Requested

September 22, 2026

Dear Commission on the Status of Women in San Mateo County,

I am Brenna J. Gano McNab, a San Mateo County mother entering my ninth year of family-court litigation. My nineteen-year-old son is estranged from me, his former full-time primary caregiver. Prolonged proceedings and professional fees have jeopardized my education, livelihood and home.

I am reporting legal and financial abuse: custody pressure during settlement, incomplete financial disclosures, missing court-record materials, and barriers to a fair hearing and due process.

Please also investigate reports of children being removed from safe caregivers and pressured to reject them—what affected parents describe as “brainwashing”—and the resulting psychological harm.

Please help organize court watchers for my September 30, 2026 hearing in San Mateo Superior Court, Department 17, case 18FAM01991 at 9am.

Please place these concerns on a future agenda and refer my request for a **targeted funding freeze and independent audit** to the appropriate oversight authorities.

The FREEZE proposal calls for suspending high-risk administrative funding and auditing billing practices and professional networks. Preserve court, billing and referral records. Determine whether public funds support practices harming women and children, without interrupting support payments owed to families.

Please acknowledge this comment and designate a contact to coordinate court watchers and follow-up.

Brenna J. Gano McNab

From: [Brenna J. Gano](#)
To: [Tanya Beat](#)
Cc: [Sam Liccardo](#); [kevin.fong](#); [senator.becker@senate.ca.gov](#); [Noelia Corzo](#); [Jacki Rigoni](#); [SMC_SupMueller](#); [Michael Callagy](#); [Angela Hodges](#); [ADA](#); [Dept9](#)
Subject: Urgent follow-up: September 30 court watchers requested; investigation, and funding audit
Date: Sunday, September 27, 2026 2:33:35 PM
Attachments: [20260922 Ltr to SMC Commission on Status of Women.pdf](#)
[20240502 Ltr to Judge Lee signed.pdf](#)
[20260901 BJG IFD \(court stamped\).pdf](#)
[20260923 Ltr to Tanya Beat \(signed\).pdf](#)

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Dear Ms. Beat,

I am following up on my September 22, 2026 Commission comment, attaching my Income and Expense Declaration, and May 2, 2024 letter to Judge Lee.

These documents show how long I have sought assistance and the financial imbalance: my 2024 letter reported nearly six years without a contribution toward legal fees; my September 2026 declaration cites a \$66,858.83 mortgage reinstatement demand and my former spouse's reported 2025 W-2 earnings of \$1,858,959.

My concerns began in 2018 when lawyers on both sides collaborated and coordinated with Family Court Services mediator Samantha Esver-Poon to deliberately undermine and maliciously sever my mother-child bond.

I am requesting an independent investigation of Family Court Services practices and the preparation of purported custody "agreements."

The settlement process compounded that harm. My custody lawyer was Stajonne Mialocq Montalvo. Her husband, Steve Montalvo, described the private-judge proceeding to me as a status conference, or in his words, a "low-key day" to assess our positions.

When I attended by Zoom on February 15, 2022, I was instead blindsided by financial-settlement negotiations. My limited scope child custody attorney, Stajonne Mialocq Montalvo took the lead. I was ambushed and bullied, and threatened with loss of my child unless I agreed to a poor financial settlement.

My subsequent declaration recounts the misrepresentation, pressure, and lack of disability accommodations required under the ADA. My attorneys were aware that I was receiving accommodations in law school at UC Law SF (formerly Hastings).

I requested rescission in March 2022, before judgment. More than four years later, I am still trying to undo that agreement while estranged from my son and struggling to preserve my home.

I do not believe my situation is an anomaly in San Mateo County. I understand that Stajonne Mialocq Montalvo was also involved at the beginning of James Johnson's case, and that his child recently died by suicide. Her involvement alone does not establish responsibility for that death, but the concerns raised across these families warrant independent review rather than treatment as unrelated private disputes.

I am asking for a public-health and child-safety response to reports of legal abuse, financial

devastation, and children being separated from safe caregivers and pressured to reject them.

Specifically:

1. **Coordinate court watchers for September 30, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., Department 17, San Mateo Superior Court, case 18FAM01991.** Please designate a contact to organize attendance.
2. Request an independent investigation into the alleged coordination, custody coercion, financial and disclosure practices, disability-access failures, and recurring professional and referral relationships. Preserve relevant court records, communications, billing, and referral documents.
3. Refer my freeze and audit request to the appropriate funding and oversight authorities: a targeted suspension of identified high-risk administrative funding pending an independent audit—not interruption of support payments owed to families. Trace the funding and determine whether financial incentives reward prolonged litigation or harmful interventions.

This is a request for administrative oversight and investigation, not an off-calendar ruling in my case.

Please distribute it to all commissioners and confirm before September 30 who will coordinate observers and what referrals will be made. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Brenna J. Gano McNab

Attachments: September 22 Commission comment; September 1, 2026 Income and Expense Declaration; May 2, 2024 letter to Judge Lee.

Cc: Presiding Judge, San Mateo Superior Court; Court ADA Coordinator