Peter Falk’s Daughter Urges Change in Colorado Laws regarding guardianship

DENVER – Catherine Falk, the daughter of actor Peter Falk who portrayed Colombo for years on television and died in 2011, was at the Colorado Legislative session Wednesday to push for changes in the state’s probate laws and pass the Peter Falk Act.

When Peter Falk was in his final years battling Alzheimer’s disease, she was banned from seeing him by her estranged stepmother. She took her fight to probate court where the process cost $100,000.

“That’s the problem, we are advocating this bill because people don’t have this kind of money,” Falk said. “I come here today no longer just the daughter of Peter Falk.”

The Falk Act would make it harder for adult children to be banned from seeing or caring for loved ones.

“We have a growing problem of people being isolated from family and friends,” said State Sen. Laura Woods, who proposed the bill.

The Judiciary Committee cleared the bill on Wednesday and sent it to the Appropriations Committee. The Colorado Bar Association has spoken out against the bill.

Representatives said they are willing to work with Woods on future versions of the bill. The Colorado Bar Association said the current system should be able to address the issues that the victims have addressed.

Woods is planning on introducing other probate reform measures this session.

Actor Peter Falk’s Daughter Urges Change in Colorado Law to promote Guardianship rights

Actor Peter Falk’s Daughter Pushing For Change In Legal Guardianship Law

DENVER (CBS4) – Some Colorado lawmakers want to strip some the decision making power from legal guardians, and they’re getting help from the daughter of a famous actor.

The bill is named after Peter Falk, the actor who played Columbo on TV. What it does seems basic – it simply allows families to see their loved ones when they become incapacitated. It’s about the power of guardians and the rights of some of the most vulnerable Coloradans.

Peter Falk was known to TV viewers as the disheveled, endearing detective Columbo. Catherine Falk knew him as “Dad.

“He was exactly the same on screen as off screen,” Catherine Falk said. “He was just this tender, really funny, goofy person.”

But Peter Falk’s life would take a tragic turn when he developed Alzheimer’s disease. His second wife isolated him, forcing his daughter to go to probate court just to see her father before he died.

“It cost me close to $100,000 in my money, not my dad’s money, my money to get in just before he passed away; that’s wrong,” Catherine Falk said.

Sen. Laura Woods, R-Jefferson County, agrees.

“The same program designed to protect these vulnerable citizens also exposes them to exploitation,” Woods said.

She’s introduced a bill – named after Peter Falk – that would prohibit guardians from cutting off contact with family.

“The guardian assumes all of the rights of the person that they are guardian for; so they can say, ‘No visitors, no phone calls, no mail,’ and really isolate the most vulnerable in our society, which are the elderly and adults with disabilities,” Woods said.

The Colorado Bar Association says the bill is unnecessary.

“A guardian is already charged to, and I quote, ‘At all times act in ward’s best interest and exercise reasonable care, diligence and prudence,’” a representative from the Colorado Bar Association said.

But Catherine Falk says when that doesn’t happen the only recourse is expensive litigation.

“The incapacitated person, the person the law intends to protect, very often ends up dying alone,” Catherine Falk said.

The bill passed unanimously out its first committee Wednesday but it still has a long way to go before becoming law. Catherine Falk is fighting for similar legislation in nine other states.

Peter Falk’s Daughter Pushing for Change in Guardianship Law

Peter Falk’s Daughter pushing for change in Guardianship law

Senate & Jurisprudence Hearing SB 6235 Washington

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Senate & Jurisprudence SB 6235

Peter Falk: Financial Exploitation of the Elderly

The Falk Family: Peter & Alyce Falk with Daughters, Jackie & Catherine

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Catherine Falk discusses the Peter Falk Bill

Published on May 14, 2015
The daughter of Peter Falk joins Newsmax Now to discuss the Peter Falk Bill.

Breaking News for Children Visitation Rights

CATHERINE FALK DAUGHTER OF THE LATE TV & FILM STAR PETER FALK ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT “THE PETER FALK BILL” IS BEING SPONSORED BY NY STATE

ASSEMBLYMAN WILLIAM B. MAGNARELLI (D) AND NY STATE SENATOR JOHN DEFRANCISO (R)

THIS BILL HAS BI-PARTISAN SUPPORT! PETER FALK'S HOME STATE OF NEW YORK IS THE RIGHT STATE FOR THIS BILL TO START

Los Angeles, CA – Catherine Falk – (www.catherinefalkorganization.org), the youngest daughter of TV/ film star Peter Falk, who was loved by millions as COLUMBO, announced today that The Peter Falk Bill is closer to being a reality in the state of New York.

NY State Assemblyman William B. Magnarelli (D) of Syracuse is sponsoring The Peter Falk Bill A.3461 which is in the legislation and being decided on by the New York state assembly. At the same time New York State Senator John DeFrancisco (R), who serves as Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee is sponsoring and introducing the bill S.5154 in the current NY state senate session. In addition, there are 12 other assemblyman and woman who support this bill.

> *Assemblyman Magnarelli states, "This piece of legislation will ensure that the rights of adult children are respected when their parent is under a conservatorship. It guarantees their basic right to be informed about significant changes in their parent's condition, including death and burial arrangements. It also provides a procedural path for adult children to petition the court for visitation if they believe their parent is being improperly isolated from them. This bill will be named in the honor of the late Peter Falk, renowned actor, New York native and Syracuse University Alumnus."*

> *Catherine Falk states, "My parents met while attending Syracuse University and we are all graduates of that great school, so Syracuse and New York is the right state for this*

bill to start."

Catherine Falk has been on a journey that started 2009-2010 when she went to trial fighting in probate court for visitation rights under the conservatorship umbrella with her dad's second spouse; who was isolating not only Catherine but also her sister Jackie, family members, his first wife Alyce and friends.

> *Falk maintains that "Once again greed and money were at the bottom of the problem for isolation of an elderly parent." During the court case Falk turned to her then attorney and told him that they must create and write a bill that would pass a law to prevent this from happening again to anyone in the future.*

In 2011 Catherine Falk and her then attorney created and pioneered the first draft for the California visitation rights bill AB1085 which was the first of its kind for California. Assemblyman Mike Gatto of Burbank, CA sponsored the bill, which is expected to become law in the State of California.

Catherine Falk is brave and with her own money is funding this bill. No donations are being asked for or accepted. As a matter of fact Catherine does not believe anyone with a similar bill should ever make money from this kind of work! Falk said "It seems that people get side tracked and try to get fame and fortune from getting bills like this passed, I seek neither; I truly want to see no one else lose precious time with their parent."

Catherine Falk now has huge momentum in New York State for this bill to pass. This year is the 4th Anniversary of Peter Falk's death; it would be great to get this bill passed in NY State this year. Falk states that 'My dad always told me "go get them kid" He always taught me to stay true to myself and stay true to who I am, and to fight for what I know is

right…Just one more thing Ma'am…was truly how he lived his life on and off the screen."

> *Falks Publicist, Roger Neal said, "Many stars are lining up to support the Peter Falk Bill including: Ron Masak star of Murder She Wrote who was a friend of Peter Falk for many years, Kerry and Kimmy Rooney the children of movie star legend Mickey Rooney; who know all too well what Falk and many others are going thru when denied access to their ailing parent by a step parent. In addition, Jackie Falk and their mother Alyce Falk (Peter Falk's first wife) are in full support of Catherine and this bill"*

LOGAN CLARKE, renowned investigator of human trafficking supports the Peter Falk Bill.

> *Catherine Falk said "I am very excited and hopeful that the NY ASSEMBLY and the NY STATE SENATE will pass the Peter Falk Bill. Falk stated that The Peter Falk Bill is also being considered in the states of New Jersey, Washington D.C., Florida, Utah, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Maine.*

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PR FIRM FOR CATHERINE FALK AND THE PETER FALK BILL