

## IN THE NEWS

# Lathrop GPM Partner Amy Erickson Authors “Guardianship, Conservatorship Lessons From Wendy Williams and Britney Spears” for Wealth Management

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Lathrop GPM Partner [Amy Erickson](#) authored an insightful article for *Wealth Management* exploring the critical lessons learned from the high-profile guardianship and conservatorship cases involving TV personality Wendy Williams and pop star Britney Spears. Erickson’s piece delves into how these celebrity cases have brought mainstream attention to the complexities and potential pitfalls of guardianships and conservatorships, prompting important discussions about individual autonomy, rights, and the necessity of robust oversight.

Erickson defines guardianships and conservatorships as legal processes through which courts determine an individual’s capacity to manage personal and/or financial affairs, subsequently appointing a representative to make decisions on their behalf when warranted by impairment. She clarifies that such appointments are made when an individual is “not capable of receiving information and making decisions,” not simply for making poor choices.

The article provides a detailed look at the specifics of both the Wendy Williams guardianship and the Britney Spears conservatorship, highlighting the concerns that arose in each case regarding mental capacity, undue influence, and the protected person’s autonomy. Erickson then offers four key takeaways for advisors with clients who may be considering or involved in guardianship or conservatorship matters:

- **Legal representation:** Emphasizing the importance of an attorney as an effective advocate for the protected person’s rights.
- **Oversight and transparency:** Calling for increased transparency and regular court reviews, especially in light of recent cases.
- **Termination:** Explaining that protected persons can petition the court for termination and outlining the conditions under which this may occur.
- **Alternatives:** Stressing the consideration of alternatives such as medical powers of attorney, financial management tools, and limited guardianships/conservatorships.

## Related People

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Erickson concludes by affirming that while these high-profile cases have raised concerns, guardianships and conservatorships remain “effective mechanisms to protect society’s most vulnerable from abuse and harm.” She underscores the importance of ensuring these laws are applied appropriately and that strong safeguards are maintained to preserve the autonomy of protected persons to the greatest extent possible.

Read the full *Wealth Management* article here: [Guardianship, Conservatorship Lessons From Wendy Williams and Britney Spears](#)