

STATEMENT BY ORIN SNYDER AND MATT BENJAMIN, ATTORNEYS FOR RUTH AND PHIL MARKEL

The Markel family is grateful to all of the legislators and advocates who are fighting for this important pro-family legislation that would allow grandparents the opportunity to ask a court for access to their grandchildren. The lengths that Ms. Adelson and her lawyer have gone to defeat this legislation are unfortunate and based on untruths.

Wendi Adelson's family allegedly orchestrated the murder of Dan Markel. Ms. Adelson then changed the family name of Dan's boys from Markel to Adelson, and completely severed the relationship between the boys and the Markel family. The boys have been prevented from seeing or communicating with their paternal grandparents for nearly four years.

Now, Ms. Adelson's lawyer is making outlandish statements in a deplorable effort to justify her malicious behavior. Let us set the record straight. Here are the facts:

The Markel family never engaged in any discussions "to place the children in foster care." Ms. Adelson and her lawyer know this accusation is untrue because the Markel family, the State Attorney's Office, and the Executive Director of JAFCO have all repeatedly explained what happened.

Ruth Markel reached out to JAFCO to ask about a backup emergency safety plan for her grandsons, in the event members of the Adelson family were arrested when the children were present. That was and remains a very real and credible concern, given that law enforcement has publicly accused members of the Adelson family of orchestrating Dan Markel's murder. At no time did the Markel family ever suggest placing the children in foster care or seek temporary or permanent custody. Again, that is a falsehood being peddled by Ms. Adelson and her lawyer to protect Ms. Adelson and to defeat legislation that would allow grandparents the opportunity to ask a court for access to their grandchildren.