

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Dawn Roberson](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Friday, June 06, 2014 4:10:05 PM

-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2014 2:50 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Friday, June 6, 2014 - 14:50

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Brenda

Last Name: Miller

Title: Parent and Guardian

Organization you are affiliated with:

City: Carrollton

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or
Opposed:

Testimony of Brenda Miller , Carrollton, TX

Response to the
SUNSET ADVISORY COMMISSION
Staff Report
May 2014
Department of Aging and Disability Services

I am Brenda Miller from Carrollton, Texas. My 44 year old son lives quite comfortably at Denton State Supported Living Center. I am proud of him and I am proud of the DSSLC. There he has a quality of life that ensures him safety, stability, recreation, medical attention, therapies and religious services to the extent that he is able to participate.

I have read this Staff Report two times by now and studied more deeply into several of the areas that give me the greatest concern. Being a State Supported Living Center Mom, happy and relieved with my son's living arrangement, I am opposed to the recommendations made in the Staff Report.

- I oppose the closure of any state supported living center when there are citizens of Texas who need them
- I oppose the nonsense of naming a Closure Commission to evaluate the

SSLCs looking to determine additional centers to close and thus removing representation.

- I oppose and hate the idea of deadlines.

I will say that I believe this report to be objective. It appears to be an equal opportunity report that finds fault with every aspect. The report criticizes DADS; it criticizes the State Supported Living Centers; it criticizes the community group homes, it criticizes the Day Hab services and it criticizes the QRS Internet system. Nothing was left unscathed. But, recommendations were made. They work something like a penalty. A penalty for living with mental retardation which is now referred obscurely to as Intellectual Disabilities. You know what those are. We all have them. Even my dog has intellectual disabilities. The old term, "Mental Retardation:" says it all.

Now what does this mean to me: I will tell you. If I were still a young parent with a young son as I once was, State Supported Living Centers would really worry me. But, if I had to consider Group Homes instead, it would scare me to death. For when compared one to the other, the Group Homes do not come even close to what the State Supported Living Centers offer. My informed decision would once again be for a SSLC. Easy decision – no, of course not. Final decision – I hope so!

The SSLCs in the past five years have come under the scrutiny of the Department of Justice. Standards were raised beyond belief. Staffing ratios were improved. Facilities were improved to meet almost every physical need. DOJ Standards were weighed against the Standards of the past. Improvements followed. Quality Improved.

Group Homes do not meet these standards nor do they enjoy longevity. A group home can be here today and gone tomorrow on the whim of the provider/ owner or operator. Where is the stability in that. By closing SSLCs, you draw an end to something that is very, very good. It is likely that in the future, the proponents who now wish to close the SSLCs will come to realize that they are the ones in desperate need of the life-saving services once available to the citizens of Texas but are now denied. Sometimes, when you wish to make something which you think at the time is better, you lose forever that which was good.

I hope that many of the recommendations in this report will not be considered or implemented.

Thank you,
Brenda Miller

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:
Do not close any state supported living centers

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree