

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Dawn Roberson](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Monday, June 02, 2014 8:30:14 AM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Saturday, May 31, 2014 9:24 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Saturday, May 31, 2014 - 21:23

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Jean

Last Name: Wilcox

Title: Parent/Guardian

Organization you are affiliated with: RRSS Parents Association & PART

City: houston

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or
Opposed:
ISSUE 1

My son is 50 yrs. and has recently been diagnosed with dementia-Alzheimer type. He was born downe syndrome, is severely & mentally retarded and does not speak. He has been a resident in the Texas State Schools (Lubbock & Richmond) since he was 4 yrs. old and was in a private place here in Hou, TX for the first 4 yrs. He was the 40th resident to be admitted to RSS (now RSSLC).

I am not an educated person in that I don't have a college education, so my comments are strictly from the bottom of my heart fighting for my son's home as RSSLC since this is where he has resided since he was 4 yrs. old. I realize RSSLC is not on the list, but it will be eventually. Also, the land given to build on this property cannot be sold for profit, plus it has a fault line. This came out in a previous study. The effort to close the state schools has been going on for years. It has boiled down to the excuse that the total number of resident has gone down and is costing the state too much money. The reason is with the State wanting to close them down in the first place, they have legally transferred the residents into community homes (which are not regulated and run for profit) who do not have guardians, therefore, bringing the total down. This has been going on for yrs. and I know it for a fact since I feel like I've been in the system as long as my son as I've had to deal with it for him.

I also know of some who went for help through the Houston MHMR, and they do not communicate to those needing help with their children that there is another option besides the community, RSSLC! I have been told that the Legislature made this a mandatory requirement, but it is not being done, therefore making the population at RSSLC lower than necessary; this is also probably being done in cities where there is a state school. Yet the dual-diagnosed (retarded & detrimental to the public) get admitted somehow (possibly by the court) and are a danger to my son (child as that's what he is as I think his mentality registers 3 mos.), if they should ever meet. Yet the innocent are penalized by not being admitted or advised this option is available.

My knowledge is that the research for the all the eight issues was either done by the employees of, I assume, DADS or HHS. The Sunset Committee did not set up the recommendations; they are just to review them. It baffles me how the Sunset Committee can make their decisions pro or con. As far as SSLC's, the need is great that the Sunset Committee visit these schools, like RSSLC, where it is a Village containing:

Doctors, nurses, dentists, infirmary, gym, horses for therapeutic riding, workshops, entertainment, swimming, church and on and on,

Travel off campus for many different types of entertainment for those who can participate, like the Houston Fat Stock & Rode, the parade, things

happening in the vicinity the school is in, out to eat, campus activities, on and on as above.

The Sunset Committee should not take the word of people that have not even visited the state schools, which are many and many have been asked. I'm talking about the politicians, too! Also, all the different groups that lobby their views re the state schools seem to think their way is the only way! CHOICE is the answer and that's why it's so important to keep all of them open. ASSLC has been having problems for years, so why wasn't something done towards this years ago??

I will say this to you, Harold Dutton, you were the only St. Rep. I asked to speak with our Houston group of PART some years ago and you accepted. I will admit you got a little lost, buy you made it eventually and spoke with favor of the State Schools. We all were very impressed with you so, hopefully, you still feel the same way. Hope this doesn't embarrass you for my mentioning this. There is no way the community is better for some of these individuals. It is a matter of CHOICE; no one should be able to speak for all! Do you think I would allow my son to live at RSSLC if it wasn't appropriate? I do everything I can to intervene on his behalf and always have. If there's something I don't like going on, I put forth my opinion. Everything he needs is at his beck and call except something like a brain scan, colonoscopy which he just had at a hospital there in Richmond, TX. Also, something for you to consider, with the closing of the schools named and I'm assuming the residents will be transferred to other schools in the state, how are the parents supposed to visit and be with them living miles from the school? The majority of the residents are older, which makes their parents/guardians older. If in the future, RSSLC should be closed, I don't know what I would do. I am 73 yrs., have emphysema, on oxygen 24/7 and have been the sole caretaker for my son's entire life. I would have no contact with him whatsoever!!!

I'm sure tired of reading this, but to me it all boils down to:

1. We would need the same individualized care plans provided by the SSLCs from private ICFs.
2. Inspections of private ICFs are not comprehensive and don't ensure the safety and welfare of our loved ones. We would need inspections that mirror the SSLCs' requirement.
3. Penalties for safety violations in private ICFs have no consequences.

WHY?

4. Private ICF homes are not required to provide high quality community interactions activities that the SSLCs provide
5. Day Habilitation Programs are poorly organized, staffed by people with little or no training to support the disabled, offer little in the form of vocational skill developments, are frequently conducted in unsafe environments, and are not individually focused to support varying disabilities.

SUMMATION:

STATE SCHOOLS DO NOT NEED TO BE CLOSED. FOCUS ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY'S PROGRAMS BEFORE EVER TRANSFERRING THE RESIDENTS AT THE SSLCS TO THE COMMUNITY.

Thank you for serving on this committee. Please be very diligent before making your recommendations. Very sincerely submitted.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: All of the above comments.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree