

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 8:28:38 AM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Sunday, June 01, 2014 12:40 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Sunday, June 1, 2014 - 12:40

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Kathy

Last Name: Belcher

Title: Mrs.

Organization you are affiliated with: DADS

City: Denton

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or Opposed: My husband and I are lifelong residents (58 years) of Denton, Texas and have known about the great services offered to the residents of the Denton State School as well as citizens who made the school a reality. Nine years ago when our severely handicapped son, Ryan Belcher, was 22 years old and no longer able to attend the DISD program (and no day time program or care), we made the difficult decision to have him move to the Denton State School so that he would have care 24/7 in a safe and nurturing environment and we could continue our daytime jobs to provide for our other three children still living at home. He has lived at the Denton State Supported Living Center in Denton for almost nine years. During that time, he has received excellent care, been involved in daytime programming that he would not receive anywhere else, has attended events in Denton locations, has had excellent health care, and in what we felt was a very safe environment. The staff at DSSLC have always conveyed to us that Ryan's safety and best interest was their first priority. We have picked Ryan up almost every weekend for nine years and know the staff and have never seen anything that made us suspicious that he was not receiving the best of care and treatment.

We have been part of his yearly planning meeting every year and our input has been acted upon when there have been any suggestions for change. At every meeting we are asked if we would consider moving Ryan to a group home and the answer has been "no". As a side note to the reader, Ryan is TOTALLY dependent on others to care for ALL of his needs. And, he can't communicate ANY of his needs in any way. When we checked on group homes in Denton prior to moving him to DSSLC, the group homes said they would not take anyone with his severe/type disability. Ryan requires lifts, special bathing accommodations, one-on-one care unless he is sleeping or has had all of his needs taken care of for an hour or so. He has to be in a wheel chair and can't stand without assistance. We have been so pleased with the care he receives at DSSLC and we are VERY concerned about the care he would receive in a group home situation.

There would be NO accountability and anyone watching over what is happening in a group home and that is a very serious concern for our family. All you have to do is look at the Foster home situation in Texas and all of the ABUSE that goes on in Foster homes. There would be even more potential abuse in

a group home for severely disabled people who can not tell anyone what is going on. if Ryan has ever had so much as a tiny scratch or bruise, it is documented and we get a phone call to tell us. Since we visit his home weekly, we would know if there was abuse going on. I beg you not to continue with this recommendation to close the state supported living centers. It always seems like it comes down to someone wanting the money at the expense of innocent human beings who only have a voice through their loved ones.

Greed is the root of all evil and I believe that greed is one motive in trying to close the schools. The state and private institutions would love to move the money out of the 13 state schools and spend it in other ways at the expense of our loved ones. Please, we beg of you to stop this recommendation. This is NOT in the best interest of the major majority of citizens living in the state supported living centers.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: DO not continue with this recommendation to close the state supported living centers. this is NOT the right thing to consider for the fragile and innocent citizens. Family members know what is best for their loved ones and those who have their loved ones in the state supported living centers have them there for a reason and that is that they are receiving the best care available. An "independent commission" is the WRONG way to determine what is best for this population.

Loving family members are and they are choosing the state supported living centers over group homes.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree