

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Dawn Roberson](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Tuesday, July 01, 2014 7:52:38 AM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Monday, June 30, 2014 9:21 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Monday, June 30, 2014 - 21:20

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Mary

Last Name: Dietz

Title:

Organization you are affiliated with:

City: Austin

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or

Opposed: I am opposed to the closing of the Austin SSLC and the increased efforts to send, what amounts to all residents to community homes. These actions put the value of real estate and revenue savings above the value of the lives of fragile people with special needs. The outsourcing of the care of those in need of critical and constant care cannot be met in group/community homes. My 66 year old brother has been in the State system for over 60 years. He is profoundly mentally retarded, he functions at about a 9-10 month old mental capacity. He does not speak words but only guttural sounds. He is wheel chair bound and is fed through a G-tube. He attempts and has succeeded in pulling his G-tube out on numerous occasions and is closely monitored to prevent this. The medical staff has told me if he pulls it out just a few more times they will not be able to reinsert it and there are no alternate sites to reimplant it. He is prone to pneumonia and migraine headaches. He is hospitalized 2 to 3 times a year for pneumonia, he was just

released today after a 3 day hospital stay. He did not ask for this life

but those at the Austin SSLC have made it better for him. He came from the Mexia State School to Austin around 1997/8, when he arrived he weighed about

79 pounds and was very weak and sickly. He has thrived at Austin SSLC.

Despite the bouts with pneumonia and the G-tube issues, he now weighs 150+ pounds and looks strong and healthy. The staff cares for him and about him.

It is their knowledge and familiarity with his behavior and needs that results in detecting the signs of a migraine or the onset of pneumonia or other health issues. I have been told in staffings by community home representatives that they do not have nurses or medical staff in the community homes nor do they have anyone to tend to his G-tube issues. At the last staffing both medical and care providers to my brother expressed their opinion that he would not be properly cared for or receive care to meet his health and special needs in a community/group home. I recognize that many with special needs do best in community homes, just not all. I think that if the land is that valuable and the facilities are too old, then a newer facility should be acquired or built on less valuable land to accommodate and

care for those who are the most fragile and most vulnerable and who need the special attention and care that community homes cannot provide. My brother has spent the vast majority of his life in your care and it should continue.

I am happy to take you to see my brother and you will see him and others like him, who need to stay in the SSLC where they are better cared for.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: Do not close Austin SSLC, rebuild or relocate if necessary and do not send its most fragile residents to for-profit community homes that cannot provide them the specialized care they need. Otherwise, you are endangering the lives of individuals that cannot speak or take action for themselves.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree