

June 21, 2014

Mr. Ken Levine, Director
Sunset Advisory Commission
P.O. Box 13066
Austin, Texas 78711

Re: Sunset Advisory Commission
Hearing June 24 & 25, 2014

Dear Mr. Levine,

We are Olivia and Norman Donelson, parents and guardians of Devin Donelson. At age 9 months, Devin was diagnosed with Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome with severe multi-type seizure activity and mental retardation. Devin's diagnosing Doctor gave us a very sobering prognosis in that he would progress somewhat normally until a certain age and then because of the ongoing seizure activity would regress with severe mental retardation. Devin is now 46 and mentally he is like an infant or very young child. He is non-verbal, cannot walk without assistance, needs help feeding himself and cannot care for himself in any way. In essence, Devin is very fragile and for all practical purposes is an infant in a mans body which requires 24 hour care and monitoring because of his mental/ physical regression and ongoing seizure activities.

Devin was placed in Travis State School (TSS) in 1984 at age 16 and upon closure of TSS he was moved to Austin State Supported Living Center (ASSLC) in 1994, where he continues to receive excellent care at ASSLC in his home in Casner.

Needless to say, we are devastated at the thought of ASSLC being closed which would result in Devin being removed from his least restrictive living environment and possibly being placed in a more restrictive living environment in a "privately owned and operated for profit residential facility".

We realize the Sunset Commission and Legislature is faced with some very heavy economic decisions with operating and possible closure of one or more State Supported Living Centers (SSLC). In making those decisions, please factor in the impact on not only the most fragile of those who reside in the SSLCs but also the impact on the parents, guardians and relatives, many of whom are elderly and cannot travel to the nearest SSLC. We are very concerned that the most fragile of those currently living in SSLCs to be closed will not receive the

care and services in "privately owned and operated for profit residential facilities" that is required to maintain their quality of life in a least restrictive environment.

Thank you for the excellent care that Devin receives from ASSLC and we request that the most fragile of those living there continue to have the opportunity to live in their home at ASSLC with their peers. If that is not possible, then please consider providing comparable facilities in Austin, Texas to be operated by the state rather than being privately operated. Again, thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Olivia Donelson
Norman Donelson

Olivia and Norman Donelson
Parents and Guardians of
Devin Donelson

cc: Sunset Advisory Commission Members

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 23, 2014 8:19:51 AM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Sunday, June 22, 2014 5:12 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Sunday, June 22, 2014 - 17:11

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Olivia and Norman

Last Name: Donelson

Title:

Organization you are affiliated with:

City: Austin

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or
Opposed:
June 21, 2014

Mr. Ken Levine, Director
Sunset Advisory Commission
P.O. Box 13066
Austin, Texas 78711

Re: Sunset Advisory Commission
Hearing June 24 & 25, 2014

Dear Mr. Levine,

We are Olivia and Norman Donelson, parents and guardians of Devin Donelson. At age 9 months, Devin was diagnosed with Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome with severe multi-type seizure activity and mental retardation. Devin's diagnosing Doctor gave us a very sobering prognosis in that he would progress somewhat normally until a certain age and then because of the ongoing seizure activity would regress with severe mental retardation. Devin is now 46 and mentally he is like an infant or very young child. He is non-verbal, cannot walk without assistance, needs help feeding himself and cannot care for himself in any way. In essence, Devin is very fragile and for all practical purposes is an infant in a mans body which requires 24 hour care and monitoring because of his mental/physical regression and ongoing seizure activities.

Devin was placed in Travis State School (TSS) in 1984 at age 16 and upon closure of TSS he was moved to Austin State Supported Living Center (ASSLC) in 1994, where he continues to receive excellent care at ASSLC in his home in Casner.

Needless to say, we are devastated at the thought of ASSLC being closed which would result in Devin being removed from his least restrictive living environment and possibly being placed in a more restrictive living environment in a "privately owned and operated for profit residential facility".

We realize the Sunset Commission and Legislature is faced with some very heavy economic decisions with operating and possible closure of one or more State Supported Living Centers (SSLC). In making those decisions, please factor in the impact on not only the most fragile of those who reside in the SSLCs but also the impact on the parents, guardians and relatives, many of whom are elderly and cannot travel to the nearest SSLC. We are very concerned that the most fragile of those currently living in SSLCs to be closed will not receive the care and services in "privately owned and operated for profit residential facilities" that is required to maintain their quality of life in a least restrictive environment.

Thank you for the excellent care that Devin receives from ASSLC and we request that the most fragile of those living there continue to have the opportunity to live in their home at ASSLC with their peers. If that is not possible, then please consider providing comparable facilities in Austin, Texas to be operated by the state rather than being privately operated. Again, thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Olivia and Norman Donelson
Parents and Guardians of
Devin Donelson

cc: Sunset Advisory Commission Members

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

We request that the most fragile of those living in Austin State Supported Living Center (ASSLC) continue to have the opportunity to live in their home at ASSLC with their peers. This could be accomplished by down sizing the campus and restructuring ASSLC. The current staff could then be utilized to care for the medical fragile.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree