

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 4:21:05 PM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]

Sent: Monday, June 02, 2014 3:24 PM

To: Sunset Advisory Commission

Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Monday, June 2, 2014 - 15:24

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Sally

Last Name: Feutz

Title: Guardian, State Supported Living Center Resident

Organization you are affiliated with: Family/Guardian Association, Austin State Supported Living Center

City: Austin

State: Texas

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

The recommendation to close six state supported living centers would do a grave disservice to the intellectually disabled of Texas if implemented. The report shows a lack of knowledge of the needs of severely and profoundly intellectually disabled persons and the good care provided by living-center staff. It is undoubtedly influenced by the well-funded groups and their lobbyists who have, for years, tried to close the centers in favor of for-profit, poorly regulated and often even unregistered group homes in the larger community. The emphasis on money to be received by selling center land is disgusting--living centers were not meant to be profit centers. Human capital is the capital that counts.

As guardian of my severely mentally and physically handicapped nephew, I have personal knowledge of the Austin Center community and the care and opportunities he and his fellow residents have there. I hereby register my strong objection to the Commission's recommendation.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency: Keep all state supported living centers open and provided with sufficient funds to continue serving the most vulnerable among us.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree

Sally Feutz

I appreciate the opportunity to address this hearing on the part of my severely intellectually disabled nephew and the many others like him who have been able to live their lives as fully as possible because of the Texas state supported living centers. Michael lives at the Austin Center, and as his guardian, I have personal experience with the Center and the excellent care and opportunities he and his fellow residents receive there. The living centers provide residents with the most protective and unrestricted environments. Medical and dental treatment, physical and speech therapy, recreation, workshops, and a host of other services are available on campus and in the larger community.

Closing any center means evicting its residents from their familiar home and community and separating them from the caregivers who, I personally know, treat them ably and with love and respect. Many would be placed in for-profit, poorly regulated and often even unregistered group homes, resulting in their deteriorating mental and physical health. The cost savings given in the Sunset Commission staff report are debatable and a deplorable reason for treating the mentally handicapped with such disregard. The individuals who call state supported living centers home are our state's most vulnerable citizens. To serve them well will cost money and will cost even more in scattered locations across the state. Consider an analogy between a living center's economies of scale and specialized care with an intensive care unit. Could a hospital serve ICU patients as well in their own homes in the community? Of course not. It would be expensive and dangerous.

You legislators have the ability—and surely the basic human compassion—to prevent a grave disservice to individuals who, through no fault of their own, must rely on others to help them have the best possible quality of life.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Feutz