

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Dawn Roberson](#)
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)
Date: Thursday, June 26, 2014 1:40:17 PM

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

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]
Sent: Thursday, June 26, 2014 12:23 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Thursday, June 26, 2014 - 12:22

Agency: DEPARTMENT AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DADS

First Name: Kelly

Last Name: Pursley

Title:

Organization you are affiliated with: Abilene State Supported Living Center

City: Abilene

State: Texas

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

To whom it may concern,

I hope my letter is read to its entirety and your response back confirms such.

Like many things in life, if you've never been personally affected by things such as death of your own child, child/sibling living with a disability that isn't visible to the outside world or suffers from mental retardation, you have no idea how painful or difficult life can be.

I had a sister, Quanna, that was severely mentally/physically retarded. At the age of 7 she was placed at the Abilene State School because it became too physically difficult for my mother to care for her daily needs and taking care of two other children while Dad was at work. Now at almost 50 years old and a mother of 3 myself, I can't begin to imagine how difficult it must have been for my parents to have to make such a decision to place their child with severe disabilities in the care of complete strangers 150 miles away for the remainder of her life. EVERY weekend we made that drive to see Quanna until Dad found a job and we were able to move to Abilene. For many years we brought her home on weekends to celebrate holidays, birthdays etc. until it

became difficult to transition her and she began to REFUSE TO EAT. Her IQ level was that of an infant BUT when at our house she knew she was out of her comfort zone. You see, that "facility" was HER HOME!!

That "facility" accommodated to not only to all her needs but it provided a place where she was surrounded with others like her. Some residents she lived with she didn't care for and visa versa and that's because they are human even if their IQ was less than desired. Quanna passed away in 2001 at the age of 37 and my family remains grateful that she had her own place to call "home".

Those born with mental retardation and severe disabilities have no say in their life and many are placed in facilities and never see their families again, so people like me and hopefully many others are here to speak on their behalf. God creates with purpose. Maybe He creates these sweet people to teach those without special needs to be humble, selfless and have a desire to do His will by taking care of others as you would care for your own.

I have no knowledge of the plan the State is considering for these folks, but I strongly oppose the decision to close the doors of the only "home" they know. Obviously nursing homes are NOT an option due to the poor funding and poor quality of care. Prisons are funded to provide all the pleasures of life for those who do have choices. So obviously there is a solution and with this all said, may it be placed on each heart to seek God's will before your own, as you make decisions for so many who will never have a choice.

Thank you for listening to those who have walked the walk.

Sincerely,

Kelly Pursley

P.S. By returning a standard/generic email or letter to me varifies the lack of concern the State has on this matter.

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

Decisions must be based on what's best for the clients. This can be done by visiting all the facilities, speak to numerous employees-preferably those who love what they do, your smart enough to detect them; interview families of present and past clients like mine who are involved and spend time on the campus of these facilities on a regular basis. By doing such, you will see all that it takes on a daily basis...physically, mentally and emotionally to provide the care you would want your own child/sibling to receive. Most importantly, lower your standards and choose to walk in the shoes that many walk in every day of their lives.

I WOULD GLADLY VOLUNTEER MY TIME TO SHARE MY FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE AND VIEWS WITH YOU!! I hope you will not hesitate to contact me.

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree