

Texas State Employees Union  
DADS Sunset Statement

Texas State Employees Union opposes the Sunset recommendations for the following reasons...

- If these state facilities were to close, many of the residents would be relocated into privately-operated Home and Community-based Services Group Homes (HCS). According to the Sunset report, DADS has an unreliable track record in oversight and accountability of private contractors to ensure that the needs and rights of the individuals are adequately being attended to. This raises great concern about the quality of care rendered in HCS settings.
- 80% of the individuals residing in SSLCs have either high-risk behavioral challenges or intensive medical needs. That also includes 63% who have both IDD and mental diagnoses. The 24 hour health services provided at SSLCs allow for the immediate and consistent attention these "high-need" individuals require. The Sunset report highlights that HCSs currently lack the resources and personnel to provide this level of care. Closing SSLCs and transitioning the residents into HCSs that are unable to provide these critical services threatens the quality of care that is desperately needed.
- The Sunset Recommendations to close SSLCs will result in the layoffs of over 6500 state employees who currently have health care benefits and secure retirements plans. Comparable jobs in the private sector generally have lower pay and no access to health care benefits or a secure retirement plan. Not only will the layoffs be a tremendous burden on those affected but local economies will be damaged by the significant loss of jobs. Many SSLCs are located in small communities that disproportionately depend on these jobs to provide a decent standard of living for their citizens.
- It is understood that some individuals are better served in communities while others are better served in state facilities. However, individuals and families need the option to choose an environment that meets their specific needs. Closing SSLCs would significantly limit the options available

to families to care for their loved ones. Many residents have resided at these state facilities for the majority of their lives. Uprooting and placing the individuals in an unfamiliar environment could be traumatic and disruptive to their well-being.