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Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 West Jefferson Street, 2nd Floor
Springfield, IL 62761

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HEALTH FACILITIES &
SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Earnest Jones and I am a parent/guardian of Carl R. Jones, a developmentally disabled adult who lives at the Jacksonville Developmental Center.

Carl is diagnosed with Severe Mental Retardation, PICA and Tourette's Syndrome. He is unable to talk and has much difficulty in making his wants and needs known in an effective manner. He does have some limited sign language skills. His Tourette's syndrome is controlled with medication. We have tried to reduce those medications in the past and those reductions were unsuccessful. Therefore, his Interdisciplinary Team, which includes his psychiatrist, has determined that no medication reductions are to occur. Carl also displays PICA and will pick up anything from nuts and bolts to garbage bags and will eat them. If he is not monitored during bathing time, he will eat the soap, shampoo or any other hygiene products. He needs 24/7 Supervision and constant monitoring to make sure that he does not ingest items he picks up off of the floor.

If the Jacksonville Developmental Center were to close, it would be difficult to find a place that will accept him due to his need for constant supervision. He has been placed in community homes in the past and those were not successful. On a couple of instances, we were asked to come and take him home as they could not handle the supervision that he required. At that point, we moved him to Lincoln Developmental Center where he lived for 24 years. After it was closed, he was moved to Jacksonville Developmental Center where he has resided for the past 12 years. Carl gets the care and supervision that he needs and is happy and content with his living arrangement. Our worry is where will he go once JDC is closed. We have been told that he cannot go to another SODC unless it is a last resort and then it would be either in Southern Illinois or the Chicago area. Where does that leave us? My wife and I are getting up in years and it would be hard for us to travel long distances to see our son. Currently, we see him at least monthly and he looks forward to our visits. If he were to move a great distance away and we wouldn't get to see him as often, that would be detrimental to his happiness.

The state recently spent over a million dollars at JDC updating many of the buildings. Asbestos abatement, new flooring, new entrance ramps and a new fire sprinkler system was installed. My question is why spend a million dollars on a facility that is scheduled for closure? The legislature has appropriated money to keep JDC open. JDC is the only centrally located developmental center in the state. It provides everything our son needs. There aren't enough homes in the area that would be willing to take these most vulnerable individuals. I am asking you to vote to refuse the closure permit that the state is asking you to consider.

Sincerely,

Earnest Jones Shirley Jones

Earnest and Shirley Jones