13-058

Brian Szuda
18 Gunia Drive
LaSalle, IL 61301-9780

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Mike Constantino
Supervisor, Project Review Section
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

Re: Hearing on Murray Center on Oct 9

Dear Mike Constantino:

To: The Health Facilities and Services Review Board

I am writing about the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

The yearly cost to keep someone living in an institution like Murray Developmental Center is about $181,000 per person per year. The cost of community services is about $80,000 per person per year, which is less than half, and serves people with disabilities in the most integrated setting possible.

Jobs at Murray won't be eliminated; they'll transfer to the private sector, which will reduce the size of government.

The Olmstead decision says that people with disabilities should not be confined to an institution if they can be accommodated in the community with the right services and supports. People with disabilities, of any severity, can live independently in the community with the proper services and supports. Fourteen states, including Indiana, Minnesota and Michigan have closed all of their institutions. These states are similar to Illinois in size and population. People with disabilities here are no more difficult to serve than people there. If it can be done there, it can be done here.

Closing Murray Center is the responsible thing to do for the state's finances, but jobs and state finances shouldn't be the basis for decisions regarding people with disabilities. More importantly, closing Murray Center is the right thing to do for people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Brian Szuda

Brian Szuda
815-224-3126