

Warren G. Murray
Developmental Center

Public Comments

As of 10/10/2012

Thank you for this opportunity. In the 2013 Budget Rebalancing Fact sheet, it states **“Murray has consistently struggled to hire professional staff due to its location. The SODC serves individuals with reasonably complex medical conditions, and maintaining the required nursing staff has been a significant challenge”**.

This statement is simply not true.

Murray Center has measures in place that have assured a plentiful pool of nurses to maintain staffing levels for individuals served. Murray Center serves as a clinical rotation site for students enrolled in the nursing programs at both Kaskaskia College and Rend Lake College. In addition, we have employees at Murray that have obtained nursing degrees through upward mobility, but they have not been promoted to nurse positions due to the state's hiring freeze. Over the past five years, Murray requested that 33 nursing positions be filled. Of those, 24 were filled, 7 were cancelled by Springfield, and 2 have not been approved due to the hiring freeze. None of the positions went unfilled due to a lack of available candidates. In fact, when nursing positions are posted, Murray generally receives 50 applications per posting.

Positions difficult to fill are psychologists, behavior analysts, and dentists. Murray has a psychologist that after 34 years is retiring this month. We currently have a contractual psychologist serving Murray. In 2008, Murray put into place an internship rotation with students in the fields of psychology and behavior analysis as a recruiting tool. Two students expressed a desire to be hired by Murray, but the State would not approve the positions. There are candidates trained in this region to fill these positions. In many cases we are unable to hire because the State won't allow the position to be posted.

It is difficult to attract dentists because sedation dentistry is required. It takes 9 months and \$16,000 to be trained in sedation dentistry. Unfortunately, the State will not reimburse a dentist for pursuing this required training. However, sedation dentistry is often the only method to effectively treat the people served at Murray. Our dental office was recently contacted by a community provider requesting dental services. The provider stated the person has been waiting 2 years to find a dentist who will perform needed extractions.

Instead of closing Murray, DHS should be looking for ways that community agencies can benefit from our professional services.

Jeff Wehking, Staff Development Specialist, CTRS
Murray Development Center
Training/Quality Enhancement Department
1535 West McCord St.
Centralia, IL 62801
(618)532-1811 Ext. 4105

Michael Gelder
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

I am writing in support of Murray Developmental Center. I was a scheduled speaker at the C.O.G.F.A hearing held April 20th, at the Centralia High School. Unfortunately, I was unable to deliver my testimony due to time constraints. I have enclosed my speech for your review. I wrote this speech based on the (2) minute time limit that was indicated. If you would like me to elaborate on any of these points, I will be glad to do so. I hope this testimony supports the continued operation of Murray Developmental Center.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Wehking". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Jeff Wehking

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary School District #60 to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Third Grade Students

Third Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School District #60
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 622645

To whom this concerns :

As a community, the city of Centralia, IL would like you to know that we put forth the warmest "welcome" and respect to all who came to the recent Murray Center hearing. No matter how much either side influences the final decision, all were respectful and listened to every speaker. Please note also, that the community support stood out the most.

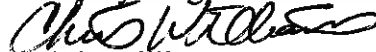
Before any vote or decision is decided upon, I wanted to express my concerns and ideas that there are other ways, which I believe could be looked into and studied, in regards to saving money and cutting costs for the state budget, and which could save the state health facilities, such as Murray's Center in Centralia, IL.

First, cut off all insurance premiums to state workers when they retire. Let these workers go out and find their own health insurance, such as those employees at hospitals and other health related jobs must end up doing. Second, cut spending by half, by reducing grants for college education. Limit these grants to the first two or three years at the most, and then stop it. Third, cut out unnecessary waste spending. A new proposed 4-lane U.S. highway 51, from Decatur to Vandalia and down through Carbondale is not necessary, for the economy right now. We already have a good road in the current highway route 51. Cut out a proposed new exit ramp off of Highland, IL also as this is not necessary. Fourth, look at areas in larger cities, in government offices, and in corporate positions where certain items could be reduced and eliminated all together to save more money.

People's lives should not be put at risk for any state budget reduction in costs! Southern Illinois' economy can be felt all the way up to Springfield. If the economy is doing good or bad, this can have an effect on the entire state! If a major business,, health care facility, or manufacturing firm is lost here, the hole in our economy can affect the entire state. Let's not create a downward spiral in Illinois' economy right now.

In closing, this is a wonderful community who always unites together to support the good for all people. One decision may or may not always be the best solution for every individual. These individuals at Murray Center know that they are cared for deeply, and that they are proud to always be a part of this great community called Centralia and the Warren G. Murray Center in south-central Illinois! Let the state know that a community such as ours, which unites together to show you, how important All these state health care facilities are, and the Trust and concern from this state, which built Murray Center (for these residents) which should never be broken from our government representatives! Thank-you for taking the time to read my letter.

Thank you again and Sincerely,



Chris Williams.

(618)-339-8560.

E-mail: williamsca97@hotmail.com

SAVE MURRAY CENTER FOR THE RESIDENT'S...FOR THE RESIDENT'S..

To whom it may concern :

I am writing this letter to oppose the impending closure by Governor Pat Quinn's office, to close state health facilities, especially that of Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. I would also like to thank you for taking the time and reading my letter today.

It is a very emotional and rewarding job, but it is the residents here who make up the "**heart and soul**" of what Murray Center is all about! Those who work here are not just another employee going to their job, they are what makes a good and true employee! They are the ones who are mostly the main caregivers to these residents! Another fact that the Governor should note is that, Murray Center makes and produces \$38.1 Million into the local economy and Illinois.

I know these facts and the quality care that is given to these residents from my uncle who dedicated his career to Murray Center. Steve Harris had worked for 37 years at Elm Cottage at Murray Center, as a Habilitation Program Coordinator (H.P.C.), after graduating from college with a degree in psychology. My uncle never married, yet he had an extended family at Murray Center, through the residents. Steve treated these residents as if they were his own children -- loving them all dearly, shopping for them, and helping them to learn and work on new tasks. He also treated them fair and each with respect.

If the walls of Murray Center could talk, I'm sure that they would have many heartfelt stories which would touch anyone. I believe that these residents know the meaning of a "community" such as Murray Center, as a "caring and supportive" group of family members, and with all the devoted caregivers!

Please feel welcome to come to Centralia and visit Murray Center and its fine people. Murray Center has a very large facility and could even care for even more residents. I ask the Governor to please reconsider his plans.

In closing, please look at the facts -- the \$38.1 million produced into the state and local economy for southern Illinois, the hardworking employees who dedicate their lives each day, and for the 276 + residents who have only know this place as their only "home."

These employees are doing their best down here in Centralia to work and live out the American dream the best that they can, so that same dream can continue for their own children and families into the future! Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

With Best Regards and Sincerely,



Chris Williams.

SAVE MURRAY CENTER FOR THE RESIDENTS...

*This is About the Resident's, To Help them.
This is About people's live's. Please save their
only home -- their only family. Thank-you.
-- their own Life!*

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing from Trinity Lutheran (school) to express my support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Hagen Johnston

Student's name *Hagen Johnston*
School *Trinity Lutheran*
Address *PO Box 200 Hoffman, IL 62250*

Opinions

OUR VIEW

Start with different cuts

STATE OFFICIALS say Gov. Pat Quinn's plan to close the Murray Center in Centralia is a policy decision, but come on. Everybody knows the center is on the chopping block now because the state is billions of dollars in debt.

Understandably, people who have family and friends who live or work there don't want the facility to close. But that can't be the governor's basis for the decision. As someone at a recent hearing on the proposed closure correctly pointed out, if that were the criteria, no state facility would ever be closed.

The state has to cut from somewhere, but is this a good place? There are many more straight-forward savings to be had than Murray Center.

For example, the state could save about \$13.5 million annually by eliminating the legislative scholarship program — about what would be saved annually by closing the Murray Center. The state could save \$12 million a year by combining the state treasurer and comptroller's functions into one office. Both of these ideas are trapped in the legislature, even though most lawmakers agree these expenses should be eliminated.

Clamping down on Medicaid fraud would save millions of dollars a year. Raising the retirement age for state employees or making them pay a greater portion of their health insurance premiums would save millions also.

Several area lawmakers members testified at a public hearing last week that the Murray Center should be kept open. Great. So what would they cut instead? We'd like to hear specific alternatives from our elected leaders.

Please pay attention to OPTIONS in this ARTICLE!

Please as a mother of a "60" yr old son at Murray Ctr. for 30 years — it would confuse him and he would never understand what has happened. He can't talk due to a cerebral hemorrhage at birth but in his mind he knows changes & people. He would never accept Murray Ctr. is the CLEANEST & MOST CARING PLACE there is. A nursing home has never compared w/ Murray Ctr. Please keep open.

Dear CGFA,

I was unable to make the hearing on the closure of Warren G. Murray Center due to work and school conflicts. However, I do have an opinion and I would like to tell it. Therefore, I am sending you a research paper I did on group homes versus institutions for my English class at Kaskaskia College. In this paper, I am not partial even though I have a dad that works at this facility but instead am just stating the facts. Please read over this and help us save Murray Center.

Thank you
Molly Wehking

The Best Home for the Developmentally Disabled

Molly Wehking

Mr. Normansell

English 102, 9:30

19 April 2012

Outline

Thesis statement: Some argue that the developmentally disabled should be transitioned from institutions into group homes; however, institutions are the way to go after weighing the pros and cons of both.

I. Group Homes

A. Pros

1. Human rights
2. Less restrictive settings
3. Less subject to negligence and despair
4. Relationships with community members and family
5. Less expensive according to some studies
6. Individuals with disabilities could help out the community

B. Cons

1. "Hard to house"
2. Homeless
3. Not state- of- the- art services
4. Not well supervised
5. Lack of physicians and in close proximity
6. Discrimination
7. Still somewhat segregated
8. Cases where people did not like these homes

II. Institutions

A. Cons

1. Separate from everyone and like an asylum
2. Cases where there is no care or abuse
3. Expensive according to some studies
4. Government involved

B. Pros

1. Easier on families
2. Community in institution
3. People of faith and conviction
4. Activities in institution
5. Provides state-of-the-art services
6. Around the clock care
7. Some considered dangerous to themselves and others

The Best Home for the Developmentally Disabled

In 1960, three hundred and forty-eight state institutions were established for people with developmental disabilities (Lakin 65). In 1963, deinstitutionalization began with President John F. Kennedy signing the Community Mental Health Centers Act which provided funding for group homes ("Recent"). Then the Mental Health Systems Act established by President Jimmy Carter put a stop to funds for group homes and gave double funding to institutions ("Recent"). Next, all mental health funding started being cut under President Ronald Reagan; he cut funding by twenty-five percent in the year of 1981 ("Recent"). This shows how the government has swung back and forth on the decision of keeping the mentally ill in institutions or group homes. Today, in our community we face this issue. Warren G. Murray Center is an institution for the developmentally disabled that Governor Pat Quinn wants to close and then he plans on assimilating the individuals into group homes. Some argue that the developmentally disabled should be transitioned from institutions into group homes; however, institutions are the way to go after weighing the pros and cons of both.

First, group homes have an initial appeal on the outside that make people believe they are the best option. Human rights are the main point in favor of group homes. People with intellectual disabilities throughout the years have consistently been denied human rights and the dignity and value attached to these rights (Ward 297-298). These rights include the right to live in the community, marry, work, receive an education, and maybe even the availability of some treatment options (Ward 298). Able bodied people hold dear many of these freedoms. Why should the disabled be denied these? They should not. Furthermore, every person has needs, capacities, and interests that are protected by human rights; however, if they are not guaranteed these rights they will end up with a diminished or hopeless life. Group homes are the solution to

this problem in that it allows more of these rights to become available to those with special needs. However, when is anyone truly entitled to all their rights and treated equally? No one fully has all of their rights in today's time. For example, blacks are still not equal to whites and women are still not equal to men. Another reason why group homes is said to be better is due to the less restrictive settings offered there. It is not where individuals are confined like prisoners; they are open to go out in the community. Moreover, based on some evidence homes in the community are better compared to institutions because they are less subject to despair, negligence, and abuse (Blatt 272). Next, group homes provide more relationships with community members and family. Also, they have equal or better services offered and are less expensive than a state facility ("The Potential" 7). However, some studies conclude the opposite in that putting these individuals at these locations will place a financial burden on community. Finally, the last benefit of group homes is in the fact that maybe these individuals with disabilities could help out the community. They could work in the community for a facility that is resourceful for them. For instance, the Kaskaskia Workshop here in town has the resources for these people to succeed and make something of their selves. They then receive compensation for the job they do which they could put back into circulation. This would help the economy.

Group homes now seem very beneficial; however, a look inside proves otherwise; they have many disadvantages. First, not all developmentally disabled people are able to be housed in group homes. These people are categorized as the "hard to house". They are unable to be placed in these locations due to the lack of stuff they need causing death or accidents. Moreover, a long time ago deinstitutionalization was tried; however, it was a failure. Evidence of this is shown in the 1980's where the mentally ill became homeless or turned back to co-occurring mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders due to the transition into group homes by individuals

(Schiff 111). Another disadvantage of group homes is that they do not have state-of-the-art services available. Moreover, group homes lack supervision because of the fact that not many people are able to give up all their home life to stay with those in a group home. Thus, the mentally ill individuals are really by themselves. This is dangerous because they could hurt themselves or others. Moreover, some may reject or forget to take their medication which could result in more illnesses accumulating or even death. Lack of physicians and in close proximity is another big issue. A primary care physician that covers the medical aspects of the individuals can handle thirty-two percent of the overall individuals' conditions; however, they only can take care of eight percent of the individuals (Minihan 1202). This is because neurology, behavioral neurology, psychiatry, and orthopedic services are specialty services that are lacking for the multiply-handicapped in the community homes (Minihan 1205). Furthermore, a disadvantage of a group home is that physician services are not as close as in institutions but instead they are located far away from the home (Minihan 1203). It would be so much easier to walk down a hallway. Finally, the developmentally disabled will suffer from discrimination in the community. For example, special ed students are made fun of in high school. It is a sad truth but it happens. Next, community homes are still somewhat segregated. They are not in the center of the community but instead are located in a secluded area or are off to the side and pushed to the back. Lastly, there are cases where people did not like these homes. Therefore, they would resist the move resulting in more pain and hurt.

Overall, the best option, institutions, has a few flaws but not as many as group homes. These include the disadvantage of confinement and separation from everyone. An institution is all about protecting a person with disabilities but does so sometimes by cutting family time and tearing families apart (Mizrahi 42). Moreover, the developmentally disabled are separated from

their community and society at large all due to institutions (Mizrahi 38). Several studies also state that there are cases where there is no care or abuse in these places, too. However, there is always going to be some complaint; everyone is not happy and satisfied with everything in the world. Some studies also say that group homes would be cheaper than institutions; however, in other studies it says the opposite in that institutions are less costly ("The Potential" 7). These studies are only based on some specific cases. Overall, the major point that impacts and sways some to group homes is the government's involvement in institutions. Group homes would bring social change and make people less dependent on the government (Mizrahi 40). Everyone in today's time already feels that the government is in terrible shape with the economy so no one wants to rely on the government. Moreover, the government already has a lot of control on people's lives. Thus, there are not really any major big reasons why people should put a stop to institutions. All the disadvantages are only based on specific studies and personal opinion over government participation.

Third, based on the facts, institutions have more pros and benefits associated with them than group homes. They have seven benefits compared to group homes' six. One benefit is that institutions provide a relief from the stressful responsibilities and daily tasks that come with taking care of a developmentally disabled individual; it is hard work and time consuming (Blatt 272). Thus, institutions make it easier on families. People in favor of group homes would counteract this point and say that institutions may make it easier on families but makes the parent's responsibility for the kid disappear. How many parents watch their kids closely nowadays? The answer is not that many. In an institution, a community actually exists within the place, too. People are more likely to connect with someone who shares similarities and things in common. Therefore, people who share disabilities will interact with each other better than in the

community where they will be discriminated against and have trouble making friends. Another benefit of institutions is seen in the employees watching over these mentally ill twenty-four hours a day. The welfare of the retarded should not be based on the setting but rather on the individuals that are dedicated in helping these individuals to their best ability that are known to be located in institutions (Blatt 271). For example, many workers at Warren G. Murray Center know the kids' names and treat them as if they their own kids. These workers fill the void of friends and parents to those who never knew theirs. In defense on the confinement and human rights issue in institutions, is that institutions provide many activities for the developmentally disabled inside and out of the institution. Murray Center, for example, plans trips that are made to Cardinal Games or even McDonalds. Moreover, if these kids just ask for something, they usually receive what they need instantly. Another necessary aspect for some of these kids is the state-of-the-art services. Some individuals are unable to function without certain machines that only the government can provide and pay for. This goes back to the "hard to house". What happens to those who do not fit in the group home? The answer goes back to the 80's where deinstitutionalization was a tremendous problem. Thus, complete deinstitutionalization is not an option. Some form of an institution must be still offered. They cannot just close down their home and let them die. Furthermore, institutions provide around the clock care for all of these people. Workers are there in a moment's notice in case of an emergency. In a group home, a person may have fallen out of a wheel chair and not get help for hours. The last point in favor of institutions is in the fact that some of these individuals are dangerous; they feel things to the extreme. Developmentally disabled individuals are sometimes considered dangerous and are seen as dangerous when they act out sexually and when they act out through impersonal sex, poly drug abuse, and theft (French 504). Also, they can be harmful to themselves and others. Institutions

require training in restraint even because of how powerful and angry these kids can get.

Therefore, this is why they need to be in institutions rather than be in the community (French 503). Altogether, these are the pros of institutions that outweigh group homes and make them stand out as the right decision on which way to go.

All in all, the developmentally disabled deserve the absolute best. They may not have a voice or seem as smart as fully abled bodied people. However, they are still human beings that are each unique and special. They just need some help which is everyone's responsibility.

Overall, both group homes and institutions have negative and positive aspects. Institutions have fewer cons and more pros making it the excellent choice. Therefore, everyone needs to put a stop to deinstitutionalization before it even begins. It did not work before and will probably not work again. Thus, save Murray Center.

Works Cited

- Blatt, Burton, James F. Winschel, and Gail L. Ensher. "Institutions For The Mentally Retarded: A War Disguised As Debate." *Journal Of Special Education* 11.3 (1977): *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 19 Mar. 2012.
- French, Laurence. "Victimization Of The Mentally Ill: An Unintended Consequence Of Deinstitutionalization." *Social Work* 32.6 (1987): 502-505. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 19 Mar. 2012.
- Lakin, K. Charlie, and Bob Prouty. "Nearly 40% Of State Institutions Have Been Closed." *Mental Retardation* 35.1 (1997): 65. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 19 Mar. 2012.
- Minihan, Paula M. "Planning For Community Physician Services Prior To Deinstitutionalization Of Mentally Retarded Persons." *American Journal Of Public Health* 76.10 (1986): 1202-1206. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 19 Mar. 2012.
- Mizrahi, Terry, Mayra Lopez Humphreys, and Denise Torres. "The Social Construction Of Client Participation: The Evolution And Transformation Of The Role Of Service Recipients In Child Welfare And Mental Disabilities." *Journal Of Sociology & Social Welfare* 36.2 (2009): 35-61. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 14 Mar. 2012.
- "Recent Key Events in Mental Health Policy (sidebar)." *Issues & Controversies On File*: n. pag. *Issues & Controversies*. Facts On File News Services, 4 Feb. 2000. Web. 19 Mar. 2012. <<http://www.2facts.com/article/ib500200>>.
- Schiff, Rebecca, Jeannette Waegemakers Schiff, and Barbara Schneider. "Housing For The Disabled Mentally Ill: Moving Beyond Homogeneity." *Canadian Journal Of Urban Research* 19.2 (2010): 108-128. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 19 Mar. 2012.

"The Potential Impact Of The Fernald Closure On Residents." *Massachusetts Nurse* 74.4 (2003):

7. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 19 Mar. 2012.

Ward, Tony, and Claire Stewart. "Putting Human Rights Into Practice With People With An Intellectual Disability." *Journal Of Developmental & Physical Disabilities* 20.3 (2008):

297-311. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 19 Mar. 2012.

4-17-12

To: Commission on Government
Forecasting & Accountability
703 Stratton Office Bldg
Springfield, IL 62706

I am writing to you regarding the Warren H. Murray Center in Centralia, IL, which Gov. Quinn wants to shut down. How Sad!!

Has Gov. Quinn ever been in a situation like you see at Murray Center - Does he have a family member - or friend who is forty-three yrs old & has the capability of a one year old - wearing Depends - can't feed himself properly - can't be alone inside or outside of the home (he would run away) can't talk to let you know he is hurting or wants something. I have a great nephew who has been at Murray Center for 35 yrs in above condition. It broke my niece's heart when she could no longer keep him at home and found a caring - loving place at Warren H. Murray Center where the staff looks after residents & are trained to take care of them 24-7. There is no way my nephew could live in a community home when he doesn't have the ability to take care of himself at all!!

I can't believe some other cuts can't be made & keep a place like Warren H. Murray Center open for these residents & also for the employees

who do a wonderful job.

Please give this letter your utmost
thought & consideration to keep Warren H.
Murray Center open.

We thank you from the bottom of our
Hearts

Delmar & Wilma Blum

P.O. Box 44

Alhambra, Ca 91801

P.S

Remember this closing

would affect 245 Residents

↓
550 Employees

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

How can Governor Quinn even consider closing Murray Center in Centralia?

I am a friend of the Bridges family who have a son, Mark Bridges, who is a resident there. It was such a blessing for him and the family to have a place like Murray.

It is hard to believe that the Governor would consider cutting spending by starting out closing places like Murray which cares for individuals who have severe developmental disabilities, complex health needs, and challenging behaviors.

Opponent for closing Murray Center,

Robert J. Kellerman

April 16, 2012

I am writing this letter to express my opposition to closing Murray Developmental Center. For the sake of the residents who live there and are in need of the vital support and high quality specialized medical care they get at M.D.C, I beg you to keep M.D.C. open.

I will give you an example for my opposition.

"Our daughter, Carol Jo Tucker (Fir Cottage) was placed in a state-approved private home by state workers for a week so we could get a much needed relief from the strenuous care required by Carol. My wife and I were at the point of nervous breakdowns. When we went to get her at the end of the week, Carol was a nervous wreck – shaking all over and whimpering as though she had been abused. It took several weeks before we could get her back to her normal self.

"Carol has the ability of a two to three-month old infant, although she is 56 years old. She is in diapers, doesn't chew her food, cannot speak, cannot express herself in any way, and she has the mental and physical ability of one who is only a few months old. "

I feel no place except M.D.C. could give the quality of care Carol requires. The staff is familiar with the care that Carol needs and I couldn't give her the care she requires. I am alone, as my wife, Carol's mother, passed away on October 9, 2011. I will be 90 years old in November of this year. Carol could not survive in a group home, as she has no way of attending to her own needs – food, health, toileting, etc. She has such extreme needs and she would not have anywhere to go if M.C.D. closed.

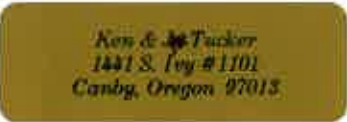
I am not thinking only of my daughter, but also about the caregivers, nurses, doctors, and other employed staff at Murray Developmental Center. They would all be out of work if the Center closes.

So, my reason for writing this letter is: Please, for the sake of the residents and staff, do not close Murray Developmental Center, as another state center would, no doubt, not be a choice.

Sincerely and Respectfully,



Kenneth A. Tucker
Father / Guardian



Ken & Jo Tucker
1441 S. Ivy #1101
Canby, Oregon 97013

Murray Center

The closing of the Murray Developmental Center will disrupt families and will increase the mortality rate of the people it serves. In addition, the negative financial impact on the state and the region would be far greater than any potential benefits. Therefore, the Village of Patoka and its' residents support the continued funding of this facility.

The Murray Center is the home to 275 people with severe developmental disabilities. It is an institution of last resort because the highly skilled care these residents received cannot be replicated in small group homes. It is precisely because of the failure to thrive in these homes that many of these residents were placed in the Murray Center.

The disruption that will occur when moving the residents of the Murray Center away from their home will tear apart families, since the families of a third of the residents live near the facility. The closure of the center would make it exceedingly difficult for these families to retain a meaningful relationship with their loved ones who will be taken far away. The move will likely contribute to a rise in patient fatalities, especially among residents who have spent the most time in the facility and who need the greatest medical care, as was observed with the closure of the Lincoln Developmental Center in 2002. Unlike the Lincoln Center which was cited for multiple residential abuses, the Murray Center provides a compassionate environment for all of its residents. Therefore, the 550 employees are being punished for financial conditions that are beyond their control.

If the Murray Center closes, the local economy will be devastated by the loss of nearly \$40 million in payroll expenditures. However, the state economy will also fall victim to this short-sighted decision. The efficiency in how the Murray Center operates resulted in a net profit of \$10 million in Medicare reimbursement last fiscal year. That is \$10 million in federal funds that was transferred to the state general fund.

Research on the effects of environmental uncertainty when an external crisis threatens the operations of a residential facility suggests that the increased stress on residents and their caretakers can reduce the quality of care. Therefore, it is critical not just that the Murray Center remain open, but that the right decision be made soon.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Annette J. McNicol". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Annette" being more prominent and the last name "McNicol" following in a similar style.

Annette J. McNicol, Treasurer/RMC

Village of Patoka

RESOLUTION NO. 12.02

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE WARREN G. MURRAY CENTER

WHEREAS, Governor Quinn has initiated dialogue on the closure and/or reduction of services at Centers serving the developmentally disabled, and

WHEREAS, the closure of the Warren G. Murray Center would result in the displacement of 276 residents and directly impacting the lives of 225 families, and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois does not have viable alternative options of care for the residents upon their displacement, and

WHEREAS, the closure of this facility would result in the elimination of 600 jobs and a payroll of \$38.1 million in a region currently struggling with record high unemployment, and

WHEREAS, the facilities are in excellent condition, with a physical layout that is conducive to this operation and certified for expansion possibilities of up to 400 residents,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE VILLAGE OF PATOKA, ILLINOIS, THAT

Section One: The Village of Patoka, urges the State of Illinois to continue their financial commitment to the operations at the Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois.

Section Two: Due to the local economic climate, the Village of Patoka urges the State of Illinois to oppose consideration of the closure of the Warren G. Murray Center and consider expansion of services at the Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois.

PASSED THIS 9th DAY OF April 2012.

VILLAGE OF PATOKA, ILLINOIS


STACY HOOD, PRESIDENT/MAYOR

ATTEST:


SHERRY STEPHENS, VILLAGE CLERK



Incorporated 1867

**115 W. Third Street * P.O. Box 58
Kinmundy, IL 62854**

**E-mail:
Kinmundy@miis.net**

**Phone:
(618) 547-3221
Fax:
(618) 547-3252**

April 18, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Commissioners:

The closing of the Murray Developmental Center will disrupt families and will increase the mortality rate of the people it serves. In addition, the negative financial impact on the state and the region would be far greater than any potential benefits. Therefore, Kinmundy support the continued funding of this facility.

The Murray Center is the home to 275 people with severe developmental disabilities. It is an institution of last resort because the highly skilled care these residents received cannot be replicated in small group homes. It is precisely because of the failure to thrive in these homes that many of these residents were placed in the Murray Center.

The disruption that will occur when moving the residents of the Murray Center away from their home will tear apart families, since the families of a third of the residents live near the facility. The closure of the center would make it exceedingly difficult for these families to retain a meaningful relationship with their loved ones who will be taken far away. The move will likely contribute to a rise in patient fatalities, especially among residents who have spent the most time in the facility and who need the greatest medical care, as was observed with the closure of the Lincoln Developmental Center in 2002. Unlike the Lincoln Center which was cited for multiple residential abuses, the Murray Center provides a compassionate environment for all of its residents. Therefore, the 550 employees are being punished for financial conditions that are beyond their control.

If the Murray Center closes, the local economy will be devastated by the loss of nearly \$40 million in payroll expenditures. However, the state economy will also fall victim to this short-sighted decision. The efficiency in how the Murray Center operates resulted in a net profit of \$10 million in Medicare reimbursement last fiscal year. That is \$10 million in federal funds that was transferred to the state general fund.

Research on the effects of environmental uncertainty when an external crisis threatens the operations of a residential facility suggests that the increased stress on residents and their caretakers can reduce the quality of care. Therefore, it is critical not just that the Murray Center remain open, but that the right decision be made soon.

Sincerely,

James Mulvany

Mayor

Believed to be the only city in the world with this name!
Kinmundy



E-mail:
Kimmundy@miis.net

Incorporated 1867
115 W. Third Street * P.O. Box 58
Kimmundy, IL 62854

Phone:
(618) 547-3221
Fax:
(618) 547-3252

April 18, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

Kimmundy urges you to reconsider you're proposal to close the Tamms Correctional Center. It has been stated that closing the facility will produce financial and humanitarian benefits. However, doing so would not save money or improve conditions for the overall inmate population. It would instead create an appearance that these issues are being addressed while creating greater long term problems.

Adding to the high cost per inmate at Tamms is the fact that it costs more to house the most dangerous criminals and because the facilities are underutilized. Moving the inmates to the already overcrowded Menard and Pontiac facilities will increase the amount it costs to house each inmate, thus erasing any short term financial savings. In addition, the costs associated with placing the most violent offenders in facilities that are already overcrowded, including the possibility of increased violence, will likely result in a net loss for the state.

The personnel who work at Tamms protect all citizens of Illinois by keeping the most violent offenders safely behind bars. If the facility closes they will lose the ability to provide for their own families, and the economic impact will ripple throughout the local economy, further increasing the financial hardship currently felt by many in Southern Illinois. There are serious concerns with the current conditions at Tamms, but this is not the fault of the center's employees and this will not be solved by shuffling inmates to other substandard facilities. A better solution is to keep Tamms open and to address the present concerns so that the center can house more inmates safely and more efficiently.

The local impact will be greater than the financial blow the center's closure would have to the economy. Those paying their debt to society in the state's correctional centers include members of our own communities. If resources are stretched at overcrowded facilities that are ill prepared to house the most violent offenders, the welfare of men from our communities will be jeopardized. Injuries suffered while in prison or reduced access to rehabilitation programs will increase issues of readjustment when they are released. This will make it more difficult for them to become productive members of society and it can increase the recidivism rate.

Closing the Tamms facility is an oversimplified solution that will not solve the complex financial and humanitarian issues facing the Illinois correctional system. It is imperative that the center remains open and that a better plan be developed to reduce costs and improve inmate housing concerns.

Sincerely,

James Mulvany

Mayor

Believed to be the only city in the world with this name!
Kimmundy



Incorporated 1867

**115 W. Third Street * P.O. Box 58
Kinmundy, IL 62854**

**E-mail:
Kinmundy@miis.net**

**Phone:
(618) 547-3221
Fax:
(618) 547-3252**

April 18, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

For more than 60 years the employees at the Centralia Animal Disease Laboratory have provided reliable services that have kept our food supply, our water systems and our people safe. Closing this facility would weaken a statewide system that would leave all citizens of Illinois vulnerable to disease, especially children, seniors and others with less robust immune systems. Kinmundy recognizes that the closure of this facility will jeopardize public health as well as the state and local economy.

It is imperative to the protection of public health that much of the complex work done at the Centralia lab is completed under strict time constraints. When a boil water order is issued, the inconvenience it causes isn't the only concern when identifying the problem. Once water is drawn the sample must be analyzed within 30 hours for the testing to be accurate. The closure of a facility means a longer commute to get the sample to a lab. Reducing the number of facilities will stress the capacity of the remaining facilities, which can produce further delays and errors. For cash-strapped local governments, enlisting the services of expensive private testing companies is not a viable option.

Rapid detection of animal diseases is necessary to protect agriculture, the leading industry in Illinois. The Centralia lab inspects meat and poultry, and tests 200,000 blood samples a year. The work done in that facility has helped eradicate and prevent the comeback of serious diseases that, if allowed to return, would cripple the industry.

For local residents, accessibility is essential. Without a lab nearby, families that get their water from private wells may not know if they are ingesting dangerous levels of arsenic – a service only the Centralia lab is certified to provide. Many parents whose children suffered animal bites have been grateful for the lab's accurate and timely rabies testing.

Since the lab is part of the Food Emergency Response Network (FERN), its closure would weaken national defenses against bioterrorism. Other testing services provided for federal agencies, universities, research institutions and other nations help generate revenue that would be lost if the facility closes.

Continued support of the Centralia Animal Disease Laboratory demonstrates commitment to local, state and national public safety and to the largest industry in Illinois. Allowing the lab to close would be a dangerous inaction that puts us all at risk. Therefore, you are strongly urged to keep this much needed facility open.

Sincerely,

James Mulvany

Mayor

Believed to be the only city in the world with this name!

Kinmundy



Village of Central City



141 North Harrison • Centralia, Illinois 62801-2199

March 28, 2012

Phone: 618-532-2123 • FAX: 618-532-9326

Commission on Government Forecasting
and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center Closure

Dear Staff:

I would like to express my sincere thoughts that closing Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois would not only be detrimental to our community but to the residents as well. As a former employee of 32 years at Warren G. Murray Center, I can honestly say that all of the residents consider Warren G. Murray Center to be their home. Employees at Murray Center are the most dedicated, caring employees that a place could ask for.

I certainly hope your staff will come to the facility and see the residents, see the care they receive, see the love they are given by the employees and you will then see for yourself that this is their home. Taking away their home would have an everlasting, devastating impact on their quality of lives.

Closing of Murray Center would also have a devastating impact on our community as a whole. We have endured so many other closings of major employers in this area and quite frankly, I feel that if this closure does happen, we will not recover economically

Thank you for your time and consideration with this matter and I trust you and your co-workers will make a site visit to see exactly what kind of impact this would have on the residents and employees of Warren G. Murray Center.

Sincerely,

Sharon Heitkamp

Sharon Heitkamp
Village of Central City Trustee

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

It is very upsetting to hear about Governor Quinn wanting to close Murray Center in Centralia. I personally know a family who has a family member there. We attend the same church. I know their child, Mark Bridges, is very handicapped and requires much care.

Mark and the other residents at Murray Center deserve to continue to receive the stability and exceptional care they have there. We pray that Murray stays open. Since these poor unfortunate innocent handicapped individuals are unable to express their wishes on the manner, I feel that I must join in as a voice for them as an opponent in closing Murray.

Sincerely yours,

Ms. Nita J. Swallers
315 Parker Ave
Du Quoin, IL 62832

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

How can Governor Quinn even consider closing Murray Center in Centralia?

I am a friend of the Bridges family who have a son, Mark Bridges, who is a resident there. It was such a blessing for him and the family to have a place like Murray.

It is hard to believe that the Governor would consider cutting spending by starting out closing places like Murray which cares for individuals who have severe developmental disabilities, complex health needs, and challenging behaviors.

Opponent for closing Murray Center,

Amanda L. Morrison

April 16, 2012

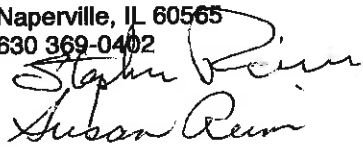
Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear COGFA:

We are writing on behalf of Lance Dickens, a resident of Apple Cottage at Murray Center in Centralia, IL. Lance has been in residence at Murray Center since 1996, having been assigned there as a Bogart Recipient by Judge Stevens. After cranial surgery in 1972 Lance was left with severe impairments, requiring close supervision of his disabilities. With medications and excellent care by the Murray staff, Lance's condition has stabilized over the years. We dread to think how moving Lance to another state facility might affect him. His parents are in no position to care for him at home, as they are elderly and suffering from health problems themselves. On behalf of Lance and the other 279 developmentally disabled residents of Murray, as well as the caring staff members who stand to lose their livelihood, we **IMPLORE** you **NOT** to close Murray!

We wish to be counted as **OPPONENTS** to the closing of Murray Developmental Center. This letter may be filed as a written statement to that effect

Stephen and Susan Reim
603 Bourbon Lane
Naperville, IL 60565
630 369-0402

Handwritten signatures of Stephen Reim and Susan Reim in cursive script.

cc: Governor Pat Quinn

Please —

4-16-12

Please-Keep Murray
Center OPEN. Do not uproot
these residents' life and
their Caretakers life. They
deserve good care —

Ruth Augustin
2120 St. Raphael Ct.
Highland, Ill. 62249



Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy
Faculty Practice
Doisy College of Health Sciences
3437 Caroline Street
St. Louis, MO 63104-1111
Office: 314-977-8514
Facsimile: 314-977-5414

**SAINT LOUIS
UNIVERSITY**

Karen F. Barney, Ph.D., OTR/L, FAOTA, Chairperson
Debra A. Rybski, MS, MSHCA, OTR/L, Vice-Chair
S. Omar Ahmad, Ph.D., OTD
Rebecca M. Aldrich, Ph.D., OTR/L
Jeanne R. Eichler, MOT, OTR/L, MT
Peggy R. Gettemeier, MPH, COTA/L
Cynthia S. Matlock, MBA, OTR/L
S. Margaret Maloney, Ph.D., OTR/L
Sherry Muir, MOT, OTR/L
Margaret A. Perkinson, Ph.D.
Katie Serfas, OTD, OTR/L

March 22, 2012

Governor Pat Quinn
Office of the Governor
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Developmental Center
1535 W MCCORD
Centralia, Illinois 62801
Jamie Veach, Director

Dear Governor Quinn:

This letter is written to encourage continued support of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois. My association with this center is through their commitment as a site for our occupational therapy students, who are required as part of their entry level practice preparation to complete fieldwork. Murray Developmental Center has been a valuable site for our students to gain experience in the field of occupational therapy with its population of persons with developmental disabilities. We would like to continue our partnership with this program in the future, since the Murray Developmental Center provides occupational therapy students with an opportunity to connect theory and practice skills learned in the classroom to the realities of lives in need of intervention. The center supports the mission and many of the values of our program such as: the goal for each individual to reach their highest potential, and providing a safe nurturing environment for a vulnerable population.

We hope you will reconsider closing Murray Developmental Center, as this action would not only be a great loss for the community of Centralia, but also to the limited number of sites of this type for our students to experience programs of exceptional quality. Thank you for your consideration in advance, and please feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Karen F. Barney, Ph.D, OTR/L, FAOTA
Associate Professor and Chair

April 2, 2012

Governor Patrick Quinn
Office of the Governor
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Quinn

I am a friend of a resident of Murray Center. Kevin Wayne Yingst has lived at Murray Center for 42 years. The care Kevin Yingst receives at Murray Center is second to none. His family is extremely happy and satisfied with the care and treatment he receives at Murray Center. His caregivers are like family.

Kevin had meningitis when he was a baby. He is unable to function in any way to take care of himself. He cannot walk, talk, sit up, pick anything up, etc. He functions at the level of a 6 month old baby. He is on a feeding tube and needs around the clock care to ensure his well being, including access to nursing care, which community group homes do not provide.

Kevin Yingst occasionally has seizures. Like the other 274 residents of Murray Center, he needs close supervision and more nursing care than a community group home can provide.

It is politically expedient, but morally wrong, to balance the budget woes of Illinois on the backs of the mentally ill and the developmentally disabled. They are without voices of their own and must depend on friends and family to advocate for them. If there were sufficient community-based resources for the developmentally disabled, many Murray residents would be using them. The medically fragile residents need intensive nursing care 24/7.

Keep Murray Center open for Kevin Wayne Yingst and the other 274 residents who need care.

Sincerely,

4/7/12

Commission on Govt. Forecasting + Accountability
Attn: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

re: Proposed Closing of Murray Developmental
Center, Centerville

Dear Honorable Commissioners:

This letter is a respectful request for information concerning your specific plan for my son, Darrell "Derby" Brownson, a 32 year old non-verbal severely autistic adult, who has resided at Murray Center for almost 25 years, in the event Governor Quinn decides to go ahead with his closure plans.

I really need to know what type of residential facility you have considered for Derby, since he would be leaving the only home he has known since he was 8, especially since he doesn't understand danger, he can be aggressive + destructive at times, + he needs structure + routine every day.

Whenever I go + take Derby out for lunch or an outing, he seems glad to see me, but he always smiles + giggles

when I turn my car into Murray's driveway.

Legally, I don't have the right to inquire about plans for the other 275 residents, but I need to know for Derby's sake, since I am his Legal Guardian. He cannot make major decisions + I have to do what is in his best interests.

I love my son, I know he is well cared for by the staff at Murray, + it would be extremely tough on Derby to move and change everything + everyone he knows.

Please keep Murray Center open for my disabled son Derby + for all the other residents + loved ones who depend + rely on Murray!

Thank you for
your consideration.

Marsha D
Holzhauer

phone: (wlc) (618) 526-8178

email: mholzhauer@sbcglobal.net



Pat Quinn, Governor



Michelle R. B., Saddler, Secretary

319 East Madison, Suite 4N
Springfield, IL 62701

February 23, 2012

COPY

Dear Family Member or Guardian:

I am writing to inform you that we have made the difficult decision to pursue closure of the Murray Developmental Center. We recognize that this will be a challenging time for residents, families and staff associated with the Murray Center; however, we remain confident that by working together we will effect transitions that best fit each individual's needs and preferences. We also remain committed to ensuring a safe environment for individuals, families and staff throughout the closure process.

We will be scheduling information meetings shortly to discuss concerns about closure plans and to outline the transition process for the Murray residents.

Should you have any questions prior to the information meetings, you may contact Jamie Veach, Center Director, at (618) 532-1811.

Sincerely,

Kevin Casey, Director
Division of Developmental Disabilities

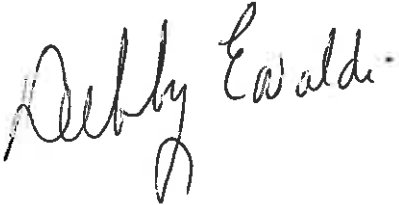
OPPOSITION TO CLOSURE OF MURRAY DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

To the Commission:

I want to express my family's opposition to the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. My family has been associated with the Center for 47 years and it has never failed to be a safe and caring place for these individuals to live. They receive excellent medical care that has kept many of them alive years longer than predicted by their doctors. No where else in this state could these individuals receive the quality of care they receive at Murray Center. Those with behavioral problems are kept safe from injuring themselves and others. Some of them come here from jail where they have been sent because of physical assaults against the employees of the group home they were living in or people in the community. Is it acceptable for the mentally disabled to be arrested because they were sent to live in a group home when they could be safe at a facility like Murray Center? Jail is not a safe place for the disabled. We never have our residents arrested. By grace, my family has not needed the services of a place like this but if they did we would not hesitate to choose Murray Center for their care.

Murray Center serves two distinct, difficult to care for populations: the medically fragile and those with severe aggressive and/or self-injurious behaviors. It will require a great deal of funding to care for these individuals in small group homes, much more than you have been told. Plans put in place to do so may appear to be adequate but when it comes right down to it how many of these plans will actually be followed? What will the consequences be for the providers if they aren't when they know they won't be removed because there will be no place else for them to go? What if services promised fail to materialize or get paid for by a state notorious for not paying its bills? Some of our aggressive individuals require up to 6 people to keep them from injuring themselves or someone else. It seems unlikely that whatever plans are presented to the Commission, the Governor and the guardians, in reality there will not be enough well-trained staff on hand to cope with these individuals. Again, the answer for these individuals will be arrest and jail. The medically fragile need 24 hour nursing care, not a nurse consultant. What will happen to these individuals when the best laid plans fail to be carried out? I think we all know the answer to that question.

State operated developmental facilities serve a valuable function in the ongoing care of the disabled. Please don't deprive these individuals of the type of care they need. Their lives are challenging enough as it is.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ruby Ewald". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom left of the page.



Jeffrey Lee Sanders

Age 49

**Home: W. G. Murray
Developmental Center
Centralia, Il.**

My name is Judith C. Kempf, I am a Opponent of the closing of W.G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Il.

I would like to introduce you to my son. His name if Jeffrey. He is profoundly retarded. He is DEAF. He has Cerebral Palsy, Hepatitis-B; He has Epilepsy. Osteopenia which causes him to fall; and other major issue.....He has been a resident at Warren Center since he was 7 years old when the Dept of Disabilities recommended that he be placed because he was going to be a big man and I wouldn't be able to handle him. Which has worked out to be true. He is safe there. He loves it there. That is his home and you want to take it away from him.. ...I don't believe you really and truly want to close the Murray Center And I pray to God you don't do this to these people.....Please reconsider this for all the residents sake. They didn't ask to be like this and why .Tell me Why ? They have to be the ones picked on to save this state.

**Thank you. I sincerely hope you read this and don't just throw it in the trash.
Judith C. Kempf....421 north 1 st. St. Lenzburg, Il. 62255**

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

April 11, 2012

Commissioners:

We are writing to ask for your support to help keep Murray Developmental Center open. Murray Developmental Center has provided wonderful care for our loved one, Wayne for over 46 years. We have kept him there despite a drive of 250 miles from our home because of the quality care he receives. Moving is likely to be traumatic for most of the 275 residents. Nearly 25% have lived at Murray for 40 or more years and more than half (53%) have resided there for over 20 years. In addition to mental retardation, 25 are autistic, 27 carry a diagnosis of pervasive developmental disorder and Asperger's syndrome, and 155 have a psychiatric diagnosis. This is likely to be particularly traumatic for them resulting in fear and behavioral outbursts.

We have found the staff to be caring individuals that provide supportive and excellent care for Wayne. Two years ago when Wayne was believed to be terminally ill, he was discharged to hospice and subsequently received nursing home care. A caregiver informed us that Murray staff visited him during that time. We were very touched by that. As Wayne improved we became increasingly concerned that there may not be an available bed since Howe Developmental Center was closing around that time. We were reassured by the administration through the social worker that Wayne could be readmitted to Murray Center when his health stabilized. After 4 months, he returned to Murray Center. This is a supportive community and one that Wayne is a part of. He is happy at Murray and we very much wish to keep him there.

Of the 275 residents at Murray Center, 44% use wheelchairs. Many utilize chairs that are specially molded to meet their unique physical needs by a machinist and wheelchair carpenter on staff. This molding is important to provide the best positioning possible for those with severe physical impairments and helps to improve quality of life. Wayne has severe spasticity, osteoporosis, epilepsy, is visually impaired, has a mild hearing loss, respiratory issues and suffers from profound mental retardation. He has acid reflux disease in addition to difficulty chewing food, making proper positioning extremely important to prevent choking. We have been impressed over the years by the quality of this work. Even though Wayne's body is quite contorted, he is positioned well and appears comfortable in his chair. We are absolutely convinced that the care he receives at Murray has improved his quality of life and has kept him as healthy as possible given his

many medical problems.

Community based placement puts these vulnerable citizens at risk for abuse and neglect. Caring for these individuals is labor intensive and requires patient, well-trained, properly supervised and dedicated caregivers. Many, like Wayne, cannot speak for themselves, have limited understanding of the world around them, have serious physical impairments and/or serious medical issues. They are completely reliant on others for their every need including feeding. A doctor visits the cottages daily 365 days a year and twenty-four hour nursing care is provided at Murray. This level of care is absolutely necessary for Wayne and others like him. We are aware of many examples of failed attempts to place individuals such as these into community placement. We are concerned that community based facilities are not equipped to handle the many needs present in this population and is likely to result in reduced quality of care. Wayne's health is quite fragile and is being managed very well at Murray.

Many professionals have on-site clinics at Murray. Disciplines included are neurology, podiatry, vision, gynecology, mental health, psychiatry, urology, orthopedics, and dentistry. The lab comes to Murray to draw blood. Clearly Murray Center has a positive relationship with these professionals in the community. Will busy professionals such as these be motivated to provide on-site care in small community based facilities? If not, how will these individuals make it to their many appointments? Will community based facilities have the staff and the vehicles to transport or will they rely on ambulance services for this need? Murray has its own x-ray, mammography and EKG equipment. They have a physical therapist and therapy aids on staff. There is specialized equipment for this care on the grounds. What additional costs will be incurred transporting residents to clinics providing services currently available at Murray?

The state's plan to close facilities like Murray, Jacksonville, and Howe Developmental Center (two years ago), decrease the options for placement in a state operated facility like Murray significantly. We are aware there were problems at Howe but that is not the case at Murray. Its residents are well cared for and receive programming to keep them as mobile as possible, manage their activities of daily living, and improve their socialization. They receive appropriate medical care. We are promptly informed of any significant issues with Wayne. Our input is encouraged and welcomed. Many employees including social workers, nurses, and office personnel have been very helpful to us over the years and it has been very much appreciated.

We are very concerned about whether placement can be secured into another state operated developmental center that provides comparable services to Murray. If appropriate placement is achieved, we still must question the ability of the staff to manage with more residents and less money as budgets get cut throughout the state. As these placement options diminish and existing facilities become overcrowded, quality of care is likely to suffer. That could have devastating consequences for these vulnerable citizens.

Murray Center takes in \$10,000,000 more than it spends. Why close a profitable facility that is clearly meeting the needs of the citizens it serves?

This plan puts many hundreds of people out of work, which would be devastating to a small community like Centralia and the surrounding towns where unemployment is already 11.5%. These hard working people understand the needs of the developmentally disabled being served at Murray. They are the ones we want to care for our loved one.

Please support keeping Murray Center open.

Thank you,

Laureen K. Stengler
Guardian

Gary L. Stengler
Brother

Name: Maryetta Roy
Date: April 10, 2012
Facility Being Closed: Warren G. Murray Dev. Center [Murray Center]
Your Position: Opponent
The type of Testimony: Filed Written Statement

I've been an employee at Murray Center for 27 years in the area of clerical support for various departments [currently Dietary]. I am strongly opposed to the proposed closing of Murray Center based on Gov. Quinn's efforts to reign in the budget by sacrificing crucial services provided to a vulnerable population that relies primarily on advocates' voices to be heard.

Murray Center is a vital resource not just for Centralia but Southern Illinois. Murray Center has been providing skilled service to individuals with developmental disabilities since 1964 and enjoys a noted reputation for excellent efficiency in the delivery of these services. It is one of the newest facilities with a physical layout that is conducive to this care being provided on one level, and is 100% wheelchair accessible. The physical condition of the buildings and grounds are in good condition due to on-going maintenance.

Murray Center not only provides skilled services to our resident individuals but to individuals from community-based homes as well. If Murray Center is closed, where will individuals go to see a dentist or physician when their area medical professionals are not willing to see them due to severe behavioral issues? Where will the community-based homes find a skilled team of professionals when they need assistance with a challenging individual that is not responding to their current service plan or health care treatment? Where would parents be able to access a fully functioning audiological suite to have their children's hearing tested in a comprehensive manner?

The 275 individuals which call Murray Center home are an integrated part of our community. Many of our individuals cannot function on their own or without constant care and are routine-oriented. While some individuals cannot attend Day programs due to health issues, some attend on-grounds Day Programs, several of our individuals attend classes off-grounds at the Centralia High School [KEC program] and some individuals go to work at the Kaskaskia Workshop. They look forward to various outings in the community such as shopping, high school sports events, movies, eating out in local restaurants, bowling. They also enjoy seasonal outings to visit area parks, camping, attending the local balloon festival, and viewing the Halloween parade. Other favorite activities include going to the St. Louis, MO area to enjoy outings to the Zoo, the Botanical Gardens, Cardinals baseball games, etc. Our individuals also enjoy visits 'at home' from volunteers and Foster Grandparents who come to Murray Center routinely.

The 225 families of the residents depend on Murray Center to care for their loved ones and provide them with an environment where they can experience personal growth, develop relationships with peers/staff, and feel safe. Individuals/families should have the right to choose where they live and receive services. An individual should be allowed to progress toward placement at their pace, not when the State or a national group decrees. Many of our individuals would find it difficult to function after being moved into a community-based home before they were confident in their own abilities. The ensuing disruption from their known support network would be detrimental to their personal development and even their health. Sadly some individuals never will manage that level of self care and as a society it our moral and ethical responsibility to provide long term care in a stable environment for them.

One major question heard frequently is are there currently operational community-based homes with vacancies available in southern Illinois to accommodate the individuals and their families? The level of care needed by many individuals currently residing at Murray Center is not available in the community at present it seems. Individuals with severe behavioral issues cannot be cared for with just a couple of staff per shift. Medically fragile individuals will not survive where staff with limited time can only provide 'comfort' care. Individuals will undoubtedly receive less care in the community due to lack of available services that sadly will continue to disappear as the State fails to pay providers in a timely manner. Many of our professional staff ask what kind of oversight agencies are in place to monitor the community-based homes to ensure their standard of care is appropriate? These questions and more come from Murray Center professionals that CARE about our individuals' futures.

The result of premature placements can already be seen in individuals being readmitted to developmental centers, many on multiple drugs to control their behavioral issues [chemical restraint]. The unlucky ones find themselves admitted to hospital psych units that are unprepared to deal with developmentally disabled individuals [which leads to further trauma for them]. And worse yet, those who end up in jail due to physical aggression or worse violent acts.

Although the Governor says that the move is budgetary, Senator John O. Jones, a Republican State Senator from Mt. Vernon who represents the Centralia area, said the Center actually took in about \$10 million more than the \$42.3 million it costs the State to operate it every year. He said the excess came from federal Medicare reimbursements and the money went into the State's General Revenue Fund. So, as Murray Center actually provides revenue for the State, I'm at a loss as to why Gov. Quinn finds it economically responsible to close the Center. In addition, with certification in place to provide services to a total of 400 individuals, one must wonder why does the Governor really want to close Murray Center instead of expand services?

Murray Center also adds to the economic stability of the region by providing employment to over 550 hard working men and women. Murray's annual payroll is approximately \$38.1 million, over the past 24 months Murray has been allowed to hire over 100 additional employees. The unemployment rate in this area is already one of the highest in the State and burdening the system with another 550 unemployed people would hardly improve the State's financial outlook. Add to that the trickle down effect would cause area businesses to layoff staff or close altogether, and community services would be reduced due to further economic instability caused in the region.

It seems the cost of care for community-based homes vs developmental centers is comparable when ALL costs are totaled...both the financial and the human. There is definitely a need for both kinds of facilities to make sure developmentally disabled individuals can find the degree of care/services they need to prosper, their families can live close and interact with their loved ones on a regular basis, and both parties can feel confident in the individual's safety.

Please remember, unlike some things "One size does NOT fit all" when it comes to providing services to developmentally disabled individuals. So I urge the commission to recommend Murray Center remain open and a viable alternative to community-based care.

Maryetta Roy
628 N. Hickory Street
Centralia IL 62801
maryetta.r@hotmail.com

Dana & I have been down this road before. Dana was originally placed at Bowen Center in Harrisburg, IL. When Jim Thompson was elected Governor, he decided that Bowen Center should be a facility for Juveniles instead of a home for our mentally challenged children. Despite all the rallies, letters, etc., Bowen was made into a Juvenile Center. At this time, I was told I had no choice in her placement facility. The Department of Mental Health placed her in an Institution that was wrong for her & the other residents at Bowen. Dana was 17 years of age at that time. To make a long story short, I received a call telling me to come to the hospital. I arrived at the hospital and found Dana having seizures and her front teeth missing. I was told by staff from the center that she had jerked her gown over her head and pulled her teeth out. REALLY, a 17 year old with permanent teeth can rip a gown over her head & pull teeth out? No reason for the onset of seizures. Needless to say, I was irate. This my daughter, my first born. Just as soon as she was released from the hospital, I followed her vehicle back to the place she was residing. I was not allowed to talk to the Administrator of the center. As you can imagine, I made my wishes known that I wanted Dana out of there and moved to Murray Center. They were very cooperative now. She was transported to Murray Center and adjusted well to the extremely friendly & professional staff. I am relaying all this information to show that Parents almost always know what is the best living facility for their children. The residents of Murray Center did not have a choice for their station in life. They did not break any laws or rules to be where they are. The health, well being, & living conditions should be 1st Priority in any Budget for the individuals at Murray Center and Murray Center should continue to operate as a facility for their residents. My daughter has resided at Murray for 28 years. We have only had one disagreement in those 28 years; and it was a misunderstanding that was brought about because the State kinda misrepresented the facts on some medication and we researched their claim and found out it was not as they had stated in the letter. This was NOT the fault of Murray, but of the State Department of Mental Health. Dana is not a person that can live in a group home or an apartment. She is absolutely where she needs to be —at Murray Center. Murray Center is her home and the workers are part of her family. She loves them & they love all of their residents. A person can see that when they visit Murray Center.

Mary Ann Brand

April 7, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Committee Panel:

As parents of Mark Bridges, we are strong opponents to the closing of Murray Developmental Center. Our son is autistic and extremely handicapped. He is an adult and has been at Murray Center for the past 10 years. His speech is less than a 2 year old. His behavioral problems are very severe, requiring 24 hr. attention for his safety as well as the safety of others. His combination of medications must be monitored for side effects; since he can't express how he feels, it requires much professional attention.

Closing Murray Center would be devastating to Mark and his family, as well as to many other residents and their families. It would be a repeat horror story of the tragedy that occurred when Lincoln Developmental Center closed, resulting in the death of 26 former residents who were forced to move to less suitable settings.

**Sincerely yours,
(Parents of Mark Bridges, Murray resident)**

Mr. & Mrs. Edward E. Bridges - guardian
Mrs. Edward (Sue) Bridges
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Bridges

Name: Paige Johnson
Facility Being Closed: Murray Developmental Center
Your Position: Opponent
The Type of Testimony to be Given: Written Statement Filed

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to **oppose** the closure of the Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

This is a home to the 275 individuals who currently live there. These residents have severe developmental disabilities, complex health needs and challenging behaviors. The staff at Murray are trained, qualified and compassionate in assisting these individuals with their needs on a 24/7 basis.

It is my understanding that many of the families have already tried other alternatives such as the CILAs, group homes, ICF/DD, and nursing facilities. Of the current 275 individuals who live at Murray, 99 of these residents came from this type of community-based facility. Obviously, their placement failed for various reasons. They are currently at Murray in a safe environment. They are receiving vital support services, as well as high quality, specialized medical care, and their life skills are being developed.

None of these individuals chose their medical condition. I think we all have an obligation to ensure these special human beings receive proper and quality care. The society owes this to them. We must take care of them, and placing them in the community-based settings is not appropriate for the majority of them. These community-based settings will not be able to provide the standard of care owed to them. These facilities are not ready, and I am not sure they will ever be. These facilities need to have qualified staff who can understand the residents' medical, psychological, and behavioral needs on an individual basis. These facilities need to be monitored by various agencies to ensure their standard of care is appropriate and the individuals are being cared for on a day-to-day basis. The bottom line, these community-based facilities cannot adequately care for this vulnerable population. They need to stay at Murray Developmental Center.

Please do not allow the Governor's Office to close the Murray Developmental Center. We need to find other ways to fix this state's financial situation. This vulnerable population did not cause the current deficit, and they should not be subjected to inappropriate alternative care. Let us allow the individuals to return to a normal life, let the families be at peace knowing their loved one is safe at Murray, and allow the employees to remain focused on providing the special care to the residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Paige Johnson
15232 Lowe Road
Bartelso, IL 62218

Name: Ken Johnson
Facility Being Closed: Murray Developmental Center
Your Position: Opponent
The Type of Testimony to be Given: Written Statement Filed

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing as a concerned citizen in Clinton County. I am **opposed to** the closure of the Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

The residents who live at this facility have diverse problems ranging from complex medical issues to various behavioral issues. Trained and caring staff are able to take care of them at Murray Center. Families and guardians are happy with this care. The Governor's plan to transition these individuals into community-based settings is unrealistic. These facilities are neither capable nor prepared to provide the appropriate services to meet the majority of Murray Center individuals' needs.

I am very concerned with what will happen to individuals who are behaviorally challenged when moved to one of these CILAs. Will the staff be able to implement behavior plans appropriate for each individual who may have issues? What happens when the individual becomes upset and begins to hurt himself/herself or another resident or employee? Will the local police department be constantly called upon to intervene? Will the police departments understand the underlying issues that caused the behaviors? Will the resident be placed in jail or eventually end up in prison? Will the group home workers have the time to redirect the individual when the ratio of staff to residents is unrealistic? Trained and compassionate staff would be able to recognize the stressors and engage the resident in more appropriate behavior which is what Murray Staff currently accomplishes. These community-based settings are not prepared to handle nor understand the behavior of this special group. It takes employees who are properly trained and educated, who are willing to learn and understand various behaviors, and are ready to handle the situation. I hate to think that some of these individuals would end up in jail or prison because staff cannot handle a behavioral issue that escalated because staff failed to recognize the stressor that was so minor to begin with.

I ask that this Commission carefully consider all of the facts and the Governor's lack of planning for this vulnerable population. Is saving money more important than saving human lives? The financial crisis began a long time ago with reckless spending. Murray Developmental Center is one of the top facilities in providing appropriate care for this special group of people.

Thank you for your time and please advocate in keeping Murray Center open. This is home to 275 citizens in this state.

Sincerely,



Kenneth Johnson
15232 Lowe Road
Bartelso, IL 62218

TO BE POSTED:

FACILITY CLOSURES/**MURRAY DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER**

* The Governor's proposed FY '13 DD budget is based on the closure of the Jacksonville Developmental Center by October 1 and the beginning of the closure of Murray.

* The most vulnerable parts of the disability services budgets continue to be those programs not covered by Medicaid or some other federal reimbursements. The recent conversion to fee for service for most DD programs have saved them from major funding cuts.

* The closure of JDC was also a major factor in holding off cuts in DD community service rates on the basis that such a move would derail the rebalancing effort because providers would not afford to accept those residents for services.

* The state will see few new CILA providers until the rates come closer to the cost of serving people.

* The bills that would have torpedoed the downsizing and closing of institutions may have died last Friday, but they will undoubtedly be resurrected as amendments to other bills during the next month and a half of the legislative session.

* Although we will join other advocates in the effort, *in our estimation, Murray Developmental Center was a poor choice for the next closure of an SODC. Ludeman and/or Choate should have been next in line.*

* The DD Division is working to set up an Incident Management System for community service providers that will be computer based. According to the Division, there is no adequate and regular collection of such data at present, as required by the U.S. Center for Medicare and Medicaid.

* Another CMS requirement that has not been fully met in Illinois is a conflict free case management system. Additional federal dollars are available for creating this and the DD Division will be exploring ways to implement it.

* A draft working paper on DD support services add-ons is being prepared and will be soon presented to providers for review and comment. NOTE: The Division has not stopped approving add-ons. If an add-on has expired and the need for them still exist for a service recipient, the agency should reapply for it.

* Of the 800 individuals "pulled" from the PUNS list recently, 735 are still in need of services. There will be another pull this summer.

* Some families are filing complaints with the Office of Inspector General over not receiving services even though they have been on the PUNS lists for a considerable amount of time. Under law, this is not an OIG issues and in such situations, the families should be contacting the DD Division instead.

* DD Division sources state that SODCs are being used as a clinical backup system in our state because there have not been adequate resources in the community to provide these services. There will be a concerted effort under the rebalancing plan to make these services available in the community.

Don Moss

Vickie Kean

Don Moss & Associates

310 East Adams

Springfield, IL 62701

office 217.528.6977

cell 217-971-8287

APRIL 9, 2012

COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING
AND ACCOUNTABILITY
ATTN: FACILITY CLOSURE
793 STRATTON BLDG.
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62706

RE: MURRAY CENTER

DEAR COMMISSION MEMBERS:

WE ARE WRITING TO YOU TO VOICE OUR OPPOSITION OF THE CLOSING OF
MURRAY CENTER.

OUR 37 YEAR OLD SON, JASON, HAS BEEN A RESIDENT AT MURRAY SINCE
1990. THIS IS HIS HOME. JASON, IS MENTALLY RETARDED, LEGALLY BLIND
AND HAS CEREBRAL PALSY. HE IS NOT ABLE TO WALK ON HIS OWN, TALK,
FEED HIMSELF, OR DRESS HIMSELF. HE BASICALLY REQUIRES CONSTANT
CARE AND ASSISTANCE.

AS A PARENT OF A CHILD WITH JASON'S NEEDS, WE HAVE BEEN HAPPY
AND SECURE KNOWING THAT HE IS RECEIVING THE BEST POSSIBLE CARE
AT MURRAY BY DEDICATED, WELL TRAINED, LOVING CAREGIVERS. WE
HAVE COMPLETE FAITH IN THE MEN AND WOMEN CARING FOR OUR
SON. WHEN WE VISIT, THEY ARE KIND, ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS WE MAY
HAVE AND WE ALWAYS SEE THEM INTERACTING WITH THE KIDS (TO US
AND I AM SURE MOST PARENTS, THESE RESIDENTS ARE KIDS, NO MATTER
WHAT THEIR AGE IS.)

WHEN WE HEARD OF THE PLAN TO CLOSE MURRAY, WE WERE CERTAINLY
UPSET, WORRIED, AND NOT ABLE TO UNDERSTAND HOW ANY OF OUR
LAWMAKERS COULD COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THIS WAS A GOOD
IDEA.

WE UNDERSTAND THE BUDGET CRISIS THE STATE OF ILLINOIS IS FACING.
BUT TO PUT THE CARE AND WELFARE OF ILLINOIS' MOST VULNERABLE
CITIZENS AT RISK JUST SEEMS WRONG ON SO MANY LEVELS. NOT ONLY
ARE YOU PUTTING TREMENDOUS STRAIN ON THE PARENTS, MANY WHO I
AM CERTAIN ARE QUITE ELDERLY, BUT YOU ARE ALSO FORCING THE 600
EMPLOYEES AT MURRAY TO FACE UNEMPLOYMENT. CENTRALIA'S
UNEMPLOYMENT IS ALREADY AT 11.5%. THIS WILL MAKE IT SO MUCH
WORSE.

WE TRULY HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR OUR SON OR WHERE HE WILL BE ABLE TO GO TO GET THE CARE HE NEEDS. WE ARE WORRIED....WE ARE VERY WORRIED. WE CANNOT SEE JASON FITTING IN A GROUP HOME WITH THE TYPE OF CARE HE NEEDS. WE ARE SURE OTHER PARENTS ARE JUST AS WORRIED AND CONCERNED AS US WONDERING WHERE THEIR LOVED ONE WILL END UP.

SO, WE ARE RESPECTFULLY ASKING YOU TO RECONSIDER AND THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE PLANNING TO DO. YOUR DECISION WILL AFFECT SO MANY LIVES.

SINCERELY,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mrs. Curtis Dowty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MRS. CURTIS DOWTY
121 NORTH 36TH STREET
BELLEVILLE, IL 62226
618-234-6905

JANN CLINE

416 Flagstone Drive
Belleville, Illinois 62221
Phone (618) 234-3190
janncline@att.net

April 4, 2012

COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT
FORECASTING & ACCOUNTABILITY
ATTN: FACILITY CLOSURE
703 STRATTON BLVD
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62706

The picture on the front page is our son Timothy Jon Cline. Tim has cerebral palsy/quadruplegic/legally blind/severe mental retardation. Tim can only communicate through facial expression; maybe if he feels too badly, a groan. He has to lay on a special mattress consisting of gel/needs to be turned frequently to prevent bedsores and skin debridement. The nurses and staff at Murray center are wonderful at keeping any episodes as minimal as possible.

It takes more specialized care and persons to dress, groom, and change Tim's diapers. He is severely spastic; you cannot open his arms, legs, or straighten his body without the threat of severely hurting him. Tim is also epilepsy. When he has seizures he will have one right after another until they can be stopped the special care around the clock he receives at Murray Center the seizures have been very limited these last 2 or 3 years. Through the expert care he receives there his life has been saved a few times because of their quick responses to all of Tim's needs.

We were told that Tim would not live to be a teenager. The most difficult decision we ever made in our lives was when we decided to let Tim go to live his life at the Murray Center so he could live it to the most that with their specialized program that is so individualized for EACH RESIDENT to reach their fullest potential and ENJOY their life to the fullest possible.

Because of an impaction; extremely high fevers that almost took his life when he was 8 years old; his mental and physical ability when he entered the Murray Center when he was 11 years old was less than 0. He didn't even have responses. At the Murray Center he receives mental; emotional; stimulating; physical therapy that has given him and all the other residents the fullest and happiest life they enjoy so much today.

There is no way a group home; nursing home could begin to let Tim or the others continue to live their lives to the fullest.

By the way, because of the specialized care, Tim will be 52 years old this year. Take his life away and he will die. We let him go so he could live. No different than you would for your own children's happiness.

Sincerely,
Jann Cline



Don't close Murray Developmental Center!

The Warren G. Murray Developmental Center provides vital and irreplaceable services. Closure would deal a tragic blow to the 280 individuals with developmental disabilities it serves, their families, and the entire Centralia area. DHS is not allowing families to choose another state center for their loved ones.

Murray is a haven and a home for residents and their families. Residents receive vital support services, as well as high quality, specialized medical care, their life skills are developed and their families visit frequently. Families know their loved ones receive excellent care from dedicated staff.

Many Murray residents have severe developmental disabilities, complex health needs and challenging behaviors that have made it extremely difficult for them to live at home or in smaller group homes.

Community agencies were unable to meet the unique and challenging health needs or behavioral issues of many Murray residents who previously tried such placements. Yet the Quinn Administration is planning to force these residents to move to community placements because they are less costly than the higher level of care provided at Murray. DHS has said that moving to another state center will only be an option if another funded bed happens to be available, which is very unlikely. Residents with very high needs will have nowhere to turn.

Closure will force Murray residents to move at a time when community agencies have suffered their own state budget cuts. Private group homes are under no obligation to accept any resident. Some Murray residents have been rejected by community agencies in the past.

Families fear that precipitous closure of Murray may cause a repeat of the tragedy that ensued in the wake of the closure of Lincoln Developmental Center when 26 of its former residents died after being forced to move to less suitable settings.

The closure of Murray will be yet another loss for an economically struggling region. More than 600 good jobs with health insurance and pensions will be lost to the Centralia area, where unemployment is already at 11.5% percent. Many dedicated and skilled employees who are devoted to the individuals they serve will be forced into the ranks of the unemployed.

April 5, 2012

Robert Birge
5266 N Lakewood Road
Olney, IL 62450

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Opponent to closing Murray Center

Testimony: Would like opportunity to give oral testimony at hearing on April 20, 2012.

My wife and I are parents and legal co-guardians of a disabled son, Ronald, who is a resident of Murray Center in Centralia, and has been for almost 30 years. His primary diagnosis is Trisomy 12p, which is a rare chromosome disorder. We feel Ronald has been receiving the best possible care for his situation and certainly wish to continue with his care at Murray Center. Our son will be 41 years old this May, and has a mental age of less than 2 years of age. He is non-verbal, has no awareness of danger, and needs help with things that you and I take for granted such as feeding ourselves, dressing ourselves, taking medications, etc. He is ambulatory and almost 6' tall. It took us and the staff at Murray Center 19 years for him to be toilet trained although he still has an occasional accident. My point is that we and the staff have not given up on Ronald, and do not intend to give up on his making progress and having a stable living situation. Having to close Murray Center would greatly disrupt his life and I'm sure would set him back tremendously in what he has gained over the years.

My wife and I have looked into several community group housing situations and have found none to meet his needs. Murray Center is his home and he is happy there. The staff and workers at Murray Center do a tremendous job meeting his needs with his very limited ability. I would ask that you have enough heart to keep Murray Center open for our son and the 275 other people with similar or worse situations than our son. Individuals at Murray Center have tried community placements only to find they could not succeed and were brought back to Murray Center in worse condition than they left. The community facilities are good for those individuals who can function well in them but the State of Illinois needs a full continuum of services to meet the needs of those who still need the additional care provided in Murray Center.

We are asking you to find it within the means of the Great State of Illinois to reject the closing and to fund Murray Center and keep it open for people such as our son.

Thank you for your consideration. I can be reached by mail at the above address, by Email at rbirge@nwcable.net or by telephone at 618-395-4104.

Sincerely,


Robert Birge

Dear *Commission on Government Forecasting Accountability*,

Hello. My name is Carol Starkey. I am the mother of Matthew Starkey. Matthew lives at the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. Matthew has Autism. Matthew was placed at the Murray Center 5 years ago due to his aggressive behaviors. Matthew's behaviors over the past years have been quite violent. The police have been called on numerous occasions due to his outbursts, which would lead him to the ER.

In January 2007, he spent several weeks at The Maryville Scott Nolan Center in Des Plaines, IL. Prior to that, we tried to have him go to a smaller home setting in Flora, IL. Matthew did ok from Monday through Friday but on Saturday he tore the place up by flipping over the couch, ripping down the curtains, blinds, etc. I was called on Saturday to come pick him up.

Matthew is SO strong! He is 25 years old and I am 51. When his adrenaline is flowing he is twice as strong and I can not handle him. When he was at home he would throw things, hit you, bite you even to the point where you would have to close his nose shut in order for Matthew to open his mouth. We were all the time getting bruises and teeth marks on our bodies. On New Year's Day he flipped over my Grandmas china cabinet and broke several of her and my Moms dishes.

On February 3, 2012, my husband, Daryle, passed away. I know that I can not handle Matthew by myself. Since being at the Murray Center on February 5, 2007, Matthew has done much better. He calls it "My other home". I don't know what I'd do if the Murray Center was to close.

I'm asking you to PLEASE keep the Murray Center open. Will you PLEASE vote to keep the Murray Center open and to have it fully funded?

I pray for you daily that God would help you to make the right decision in this matter.

May God Richly Bless You!

Love & Prayers,

Carol Starkey

Carol Starkey

Attached please find a resolution submitted on behalf of the Marion County Illinois Community Mental Health Board (708 Board)

My name is Danny L. Stover, Board Chair

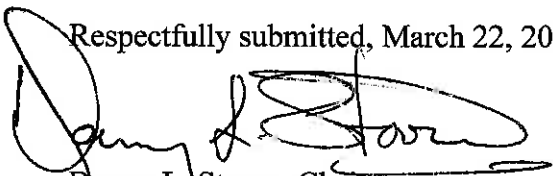
The resolution is in reference to the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

I am an opponent of the closure as is the Board and this resolution.

The testimony type submitted is a written statement / resolution to be filed.

Please confirm to: dannystover@netwitz.net

Respectfully submitted, March 22, 2012

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Danny L. Stover', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

Danny L. Stover, Chair
Marion County Community Mental Health Board (708 Board)
(Courthouse) Marion County Courthouse
Salem, Illinois 62881
(Home, preferred) 917 E. Third St.
Centralia, Illinois 62801
(Cell) 618-322-2812

NAME: HALEY JOHNSON
FACILITY: MURRAY DEVELOPMENTAL Center
"OPPOSING CLOSURE"
WRITTEN STATEMENT

March 1, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am currently a student at Mater Dei Catholic High School. Our school has been volunteering at Murray Center for over 40 years. During my high school years, I have been volunteering at Murray Center. I am writing this letter begging you to help keep Murray Developmental Center open.

We all have a moral and ethical responsibility to advocate for this vulnerable population who risk losing their home. These individuals cannot speak for themselves. They need this Center to remain open so they can continue living at Murray. Many of these individuals have lived there all of their lives and others who have come to Murray have been there for many years. It is their home.

You and I are so lucky to be healthy and are able to lead normal lives. We could live in most environments and adapt very easily. However, these individuals did not choose their medical condition but have to endure their condition every day. They like living at Murray and their needs are met. To disrupt their normal routines would be detrimental to their livelihood and health.

Moving them to community living arrangements is not a good idea. It is my understanding that most of the families have already attempted this originally or parents and guardians did not feel this was appropriate for their loved ones. They need to stay at Murray Center where they are thriving. We cannot choose their home as this should be decided by the residents' families and guardians and should not be based on the State's financial situation. These individuals did not cause the current financial situation.

We have to keep Murray open so they can continue living to their fullest potential. Murray Center employees are devoted to these residents. How can you disrupt life for these individuals and the employees of Murray Center? Please do what you can to keep Murray Center open.

It is the responsibility of all of us to advocate for them, including you. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,



Haley Johnson

Mater Dei Catholic High School, Breese, Illinois

Commission on Government Forecasting & Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Governor Quinn's Proposed Closure of Murray Developmental Center

Please accept this letter as my written testimony to keep Murray Developmental Center, in Centralia, Illinois, **open**.

I have been an employee of Murray Developmental Center for approximately five years, working in the Medical Services Department. Although I do not work directly with the Individuals of Murray, I am quite aware of their complex medical and behavioral conditions.

With a Social Work degree background, I am aware and understand the Mission Statement of our facility. Murray employees work diligently to ensure our Individuals' needs are met in all of these areas. Staff work to engage our Individuals in ways that optimize their chance to be integrated into the community. But, due to the complex nature of their medical conditions and behavioral challenges, community-based settings are not appropriate for the majority of our Individuals. At this time, only a very small percentage (5%) would have possible, successful placements into the community-based settings. The rest would fail, and this would be devastating. The decision to place our Individuals in a community-based setting must be a combined effort of important involved people. Placement should be considered when the Individual is ready, the parents and guardians agree, trained Murray staff facilitate the placement, and the community-based facilities are ready. Community-based placements should not occur when the Governor decides to close a facility for budgetary reasons without regard for their safety. We all want what is in the best interest of our Individuals. Murray Center is what our Individuals need to continue to thrive and live to their fullest potential.

It is frustrating to me when various advocacy groups state, "serving individuals with developmental disabilities in community settings has been proven to be more cost effective than providing services in an institution." This tells me it is all about the money and not the care given to this vulnerable population. It is a known fact that many employees who work at the CILAs only require a high school graduation and are paid minimally. Many facilities are understaffed and the resident-to-staff ratio is unbelievable. Is this how you save money, at the expense of the safety of human beings – this special population? As a reminder, these individuals did not choose their medical conditions nor did they put us in this financial crisis. It seems to me that the Governor's proposed closure is strictly a budgetary measure and no concern for the well being of our Individuals. We all have a moral and ethical responsibility to take care of this special group by doing what is in their best interest. This means, keeping Murray Center open.

Since receiving word of the proposed closure, the lives of the Individuals and their families, and the lives of the employees and their families, have been turned upside

down. The Individuals are worried about losing their homes, where many have lived for many years and for some the majority of their lives. Families of our Individuals worry about their loved ones all over again. They know their loved one is happy and safe at Murray. Families of employees worry about their jobs, where unemployment is already at 11.5 percent. The closure of Murray would be devastating to the community, which cannot afford to lose an additional 575 jobs in this area. This would cause a trickle down effect, causing loss of business for restaurants, stores, car dealerships, and many other areas such as schools and churches.

In closing, Murray Individuals receive vital support services, as well as high quality, specialized medical care, their life skills are developed and their families visit frequently. Individuals have a stable, safe and fulfilling life in their current home that we call Murray Developmental Center.

Thank you for your time and please advocate to keep Murray Developmental Center open.

Sincerely,



Lisa Johnson
15232 Lowe Road
Bartelso, IL 62218

SAVE MURREY CENTER
Centralia regain

Dear Commissioners

I am against the closing of Murrey Center. I feel that Government and Governor Quinn should cut the badge by starting at the top in his office and cut there pay and raise they give themselves. Its not right to close a facility that is the home to many of these people who have lived in this facility all there life and that's the only home they known. How would you feel If some one came and took your home and that you have no right to what happen to you.? With all do respect we all should work together and make it bigger and people won't lose there jobs or their homes.

It you close this facility it will hurt the southern Illinois regain. It will Hurt this regain really bad. The city around Murrey Center and the lab.

We are talking about mentally challenged people who can not talk for themselves . I am working to help fight the cause to save this mentally challenged facility and Its there home.

*This will infect the mentally challenged who live in Murrey Center you will confuse these people and that is so wrong They have rights too. In this world. **This is America think about the people and not think of yourself and what you can get out of this. We the people vote you guys in we can vote you out just as fast.** Stop and think of the people who are losing jobs left and right. Because of the government can not get there act together.*

*I also feel that they people of Illinois should not have to pay for all these trips that the governor takes and we should not pay for the governor home in Springfield.IL and I think they should not get paid either if there not doing there job. Why should they. We the average Joe if we don't do are jobs we don't get paid, or we have a chance of losing are jobs.
I know a lot of people who work at Murrey Center and they love there jobs and the people who live there.*

Thank you for your time

Kelley Stokes

518 S Elm St

Centralia IL

62801

SAVE MURRAY CENTER!!!!!!

Dear, Commissioners

First, I do not think it is right that you are threatening to close Murray Center down.

Have you ever stop to think those people have feelings to try to think about them think about how that's going to mess up their brains even more those people have lived there half their live or more. I think you are being so inconsiderate. Think if you lived there would you want to be taken away from your home.

My mom is worker there and I would seriously hate to see her lose her job especially because she loves her job very much and she is very good at it. With all due respect I think you are just doing this to get publicity. Consider other people's feelings for a change do what's right and keep Murray Center in Centralia. With it Centralia is nothing you close Murray Center you mine as well close Centralia down that is our only good job here.

In fact I think we should all work together and make Murray Centralia and Centralia bigger. That is what I say on SAVEMURRAY CENTER!!!!!!

Thank you ser

Brooke Starr!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Dear Commissioner:

I am writing to express my concerns for the individuals of Murray Center if it is closed. I'm hoping that you change the decision to close the facility.

The residents at Murray Center are medically and/or behaviorally challenged, to relocate them will cause this to worsen. Most of our people at Murray Center have lived their most of their life. This could cause them to have more behaviors elsewhere or get sicker than they already are. As an employee of Murray Center I know that these residents are well taken care of. I think that closing the facility would be a big mistake and is wrong in the defense of the our residents. This is their home and they shouldn't have to sacrifice the very little they have for whatever reason it is that is shutting down the State facility. Don't Close Murray Center.

Please reconsider!!

Help Save their Home!!

Thank you...

Sharon Starr

6 Mitchell Ave

Centralia WA 92801

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to register my opposition to the closure of Murray Center.

I have the privilege of being an employee at Murray Center and seeing the residents happy because this shows that they love their home and are well cared for.

Many have emotional and psychological needs that are met daily as well as requiring help with bathing, feeding, grooming, etc. We understand the residents needs and wants because they have become a part of our families.

We have had residents who left Murray Center and went to group homes only to have behaviors that escalated and their health regressed due to loss of structure and care by knowledgeable professionals.

If your family member lived at Murray Center, was happy and cared for by professionals, wouldn't you want them to stay in their home?

Save Murray Center. Save their home.

Submitted by:

Annie Killion

211 Cedar Street

Centralia, Illinois 62801

Savannah62801@hotmail.com

3-25-12

COGFA Commission:

I am writing to express my deepest concerns about the proposed closure of Murray Center in Centralia, IL.

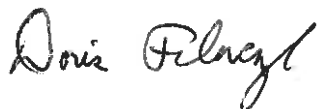
To close a facility such as Murray Center would be an absolute Government failure and total breakdown of what I have always believed living in America stands for which is Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. What about those with very specialized cares and needs? What about their American dreams? Should they not be entitled to the same freedoms we enjoy? I've always believed that in this great country that we were about saving lives. To force these citizens out of their home would not be life saving. It would be life ending.

It is wrong, careless, and negligent to believe that when dealing with the developmentally disabled there is a one size fits all solution. Nursing homes, Assisted Living, and CILA's are good for those who fit into such categories but the residents at Murray Center have multiple disabilities, disorders, diseases, etc. whose lives depend upon the professional, round the clock care, strict monitoring of medications and diets that these people need, deserve, and receive at Murray Center.

By forcing such a fragile population out of their home is inhumane, and I believe will prove to be a fatal mistake for some. I can't even believe that the Governor would even dare balance the budget on the backs and the very lives of Illinois' most vulnerable citizens!

I am including a copy of the letter I have written to the Governor and a plea from my son, Donny, who resides at Murray Center. Please, be a voice for those who have no voice. Protect the most vulnerable citizens of Illinois. Their lives mean everything to them and their loved ones and their home at Murray Center is the only real good thing they have. Don't throw it away like yesterdays garbage. Help them to continue to live and thrive in their home and to continue to receive the special services they so need and deserve! Thank you very much!

Sincerely,
Doris Florczyk



'PLEASE DON'T CLOSE MY HOME'

"Hi, My name is Donny Florczyk. I am asking everyone to help me so that I am able to stay in my home at Murray Center. I am 28 years old and I cannot walk or talk. I cannot feed myself or clean myself. I depend on others to take care of everything for me. To think of having to leave my home is like a nightmare for me. How will I know that the people who are supposed to care for me won't end up hurting me. Who would know if they did? Please help me so that I can stay in the home with a family I love and know that I can lay my head down at night and feel safe, secure, and love."

These are words our son might use to persuade Governor Quinn from closing Murray Center if only he could speak for himself.

Join us together with our son in the fight for his very life and the many lives who call Murray Center their home. It's hard to even imagine that the Governor could have the heart to force people such as these out of their home. What about their rights and their freedoms. Should they not have a choice of where they want to live like the rest of us? The government should never have that kind of power to dictate where our loved ones live and where they feel is the safest and best place for their needs. They did not choose this life of being imprisoned inside a crippled body that they can never escape from. It is up to us to let their voices be heard and to make sure that their rights are never compromised. We are asking you to write to the Governor and all legislators. You can also call them. Also, secondary to the people who directly depend on the services provided at Murray Center is our very own communities. We need to keep the few jobs that we have left. Printed below is a letter I have written to the Governor. Thank you very much.

Governor Quinn:

I am writing to express my concerns on the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

My son Donny is 28 years old and has lived at Murray Center for the last 14 years. He has many struggles and diagnosis that range from Cerebral Palsy to being legally blind. Have you ever stopped to think and ask yourself why? Why does God create some of us with able bodies that work properly and others who face many challenges, both physically and mentally. I have asked myself that question and I have asked God that question and this is the answer I hear back. "I have given you this treasure. What are you going to do to help him. How far will you go to give him the very best that this place can offer?"

During your budget briefing, your Chief of Staff, Jack Lavin, reports and I quote, "Closing Murray Center will result in increased quality of life for those individuals." My question to you is how do you make a decision about someone's quality of life looking at the outside walls of Murray Center from your office in Springfield? We invite you, Governor Quinn, to step out of your office and walk into the world and INSIDE the walls of Murray Center so you can see for yourself the faces and the lives of whom you're dealing with. Don't send members of your staff. Just simply bring yourself. Don't stop

at the Administration Building. Walk cottage to cottage and see for yourself this very special and very needy population whose disabilities range from severe behavioral challenges, to the very medically fragile and with serious and life threatening diseases, to the deaf and blind, to the brokenness that lie in those beds and sit in those wheelchairs. Arm yourself with the truth before you decide that a population such as these could possibly find a greater quality of life out in the community.

The people who live at Murray Center have a purpose in life. God does not make mistakes. They are perfectly and wonderfully made in His sight and by His hands, and He is speaking to us, and to the State of Illinois. "I have given you this treasure. How far will you go to protect them and give them the very best life this place can offer?"

What about you Governor Quinn? How do you answer that question? Will you abandon them for the sake of money or politics?

If there were a better place don't you think that we as their parents and guardians would not have already examined all the options and possibilities? Murray Center is not just a building. It is a family, a community, a home for our sons and daughters, brothers and sisters. Many of them would not have survived this long without the exceptional care they receive from Murray Center, and to make them leave their home will undoubtedly be devastating to their health and well being and bring about a change that many of them may not recover from.

One last thought. I ask you to put yourself in their places, and in ours. What if someone made a decision that involved you or your loved one. A decision that takes you out of your home and away from your family and you were completely helpless to stop it. What if life handed you or your loved one a profound disability or a horrible accident? What if you needed the services that Murray Center offers in the future? We need to keep Murray Center open and thriving for us now and for our future citizens. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Dave and Doris Florczyk

Dave & Doris Florczyk

618-599-4116

14504 Peck Rd.

Carlyle Il. 62231

dbldFlorczyk@yahoo.com

MURRAY CENTER

DATE: 3/27/2012
TO: COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY
FROM: DOROTHY J. IRVIN
3742 BRICKLER ROAD
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62707
RE: OPPOSED TO CLOSURE OF MURRAY CENTER

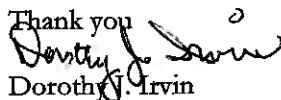
TO BE FILED AS WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Please oppose Governor Quinn's plans to close Murray Center. This would again be one of the more inhumane decisions Illinois is becoming well known for. At Murray Center there are over 200 residents, thus, this closure would affect not only the residents but also their families.

This is a population that cannot vote, speak for themselves, write letters to congressmen or speak at public forums. Thus they are at the mercy of the government at this point. I believe that unless any of you have in your family a person in need of this kind of care and support or have provided care for someone like this; it is very hard for you to have empathy and understanding, so I do hope you educate yourselves on these matters.

I know personally of the case of one of the residents, Gary Allen. He has been a resident there for 20 years; there are others who have been there since it opened in 1964. Not all residents are candidates for group homes. Group homes are notoriously understaffed. Gary is able to attend activities, have friends and looks at Murray as his real home. The reason for all the above is the staff understanding and ability to manage aberrant behavior and provide support and care for him. It is my belief that he would not get this in a community setting.

Please look at the information and statistics that is a result of the closure of the facility in Lincoln. I have been told that 26 of those residents died after that closure. Please don't let this happen to the Murray Center folks!

Thank you

Dorothy J. Irvin

3/27/2012

March 23, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Members of COGFA:

I am writing to you in regards to the proposed closing of Murray Developmental Center. I have worked at Murray Center for the past 33 years. I started as a student worker and after graduating from college I was lucky enough to be hired as an Activity Therapist. I currently hold the position of Qualified Service Professional so I have experienced the people that live at Murray from several different perceptions.

When I first started as a student worker I was scared to death, not having any experience with people with developmental disabilities. Soon after I started I was amazed how quickly you can get attached to the people who live there. Way back then the population was different from what it is now. They were children, children who loved to be held, cuddle, sang to and rocked in a rocking chair just like mine and your children. I remember one little girl, her name was Minerva and she was so self-abusive. Her family had to make the very hard decision to place her in a developmental facility because her self abuse was so severe causing her to loose her eye sight. A fellow student worker came along showing interest in this little girl, loved her, cared for her and dressed her so pretty which resulted in improved behavior. I will never forget that child as long as I live. She flourished with the care and attention she received from that student worker. As an Activity Therapist we provided and the ATs continue to provide recreation/leisure activities for the profoundly MR along with mildly functioning individuals. The smile on their face when they accomplish a simple feat such as knocking pins down at the bowling alley, pet a baby lamb at the zoo or put on their formals and ties for the annual Spring Fling leaves you with a good feeling. They are so happy that they are able to experience activities and events just like people do in the community.

Now as a QSP, I work with the person's entire life, their medical concerns, skill training abilities, their families, their behaviors, and every aspect of their life. Some people have debilitating medical conditions; they need total assistance to complete the simplest grooming routine and behaviors that can result in them injuring themselves or others. Families are very important part in the well being of the people that live at Murray Center. And we are part of the families support network too, making sure they feel their loved one is well cared for. In one particular case, a mother kept her son at home with her until he was 49 years old. She was getting up in years and his behavior was becoming more difficult to handle. She finally made the hardest decision of her life to place him at Murray Center. After placement she continued to visit him religiously every week for almost a year. Her health began to fail and she did pass away. But she left this world knowing that her precious son was WELL cared for and loved. Now she is in heaven wondering if he will continue to be taken care of. PLEASE, PLEASE re-consider the decision to close my friend's home and let his mother rest in peace.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Becky Casella". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

My name is Brian M. Aldrich. I am strongly opposed to the closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. This my written statement on the subject. I am a present employee at Murray Center and have been for 20 yrs. I have been a Mental Health Technician and am presently a Support Service Worker in Cottage Dietary.

Our individuals here at Murray Center are individuals and deserve the right to be cared for by those who care.

For the most part, we are the individuals friends and family. The individuals know we are there for them, well beyond just dietary and hygiene needs. We laugh together and have fun together. When they are upset, when they are ill--their care is our utmost concern. What will become of the individuals' peace of mind and sense of security if they are separated from their fellow individuals who have become their friends and family? What stress and trauma will it caused the individuals when they are removed from their 'home' and those who care for them?

Those individuals who have moved away or moved to other care facilities, we still think of them. How are they? How are they doing? Are they well? They are gone from our presence, but not from our hearts and minds.

We mourn when one of our individuals passes away. We grieve, attend their visitations and funerals , and they are missed. But we are comforted in the thought they are with a loving Lord where there is no more suffering or pain and developmental disabilities are no more.

Our individuals are people who should not be treated as pawns to be moved about the landscape by those who have never meet them face to face. A person deserves that respect and not to be removed from their homes, from their family, from their friends and from their community. Do not rob these individuals of the humanity to be treated as a person. A person needs the care of those who care.

In this time when we have struggled so long to remove stereotypes and not to judged anyone or groups by a pre-described image, why should we do it to the developmental disabled? One-size-fit-all approach denies the individuals needs and care they should receive. As unique as snowflakes, so are the individuals who need care. Their disabilities also varies. Don't stereotype these individuals into one mindset image. Their humanity should not be discarded.

The individuals who reside here at Murray Center are in a community setting. Centralia is their community and Murray center is their home. The individuals are in every sense part of the community activities from going to the movies to attending the annual Halloween Parade, to attending local high school basketball games. Many go out weekly on Fridays to have breakfast at Mc Donald's. Murray Center is surrounded by private homes fields, woods and open spaces. This allows the individuals to have a wide view of nature and wildlife. Wildlife which ranges from a variety of birds (cardinals to robins, red-tail hawks to turkey buzzards, and being on migratory routes of geese and ducks) and animals ranging from rabbits, squirrels, raccoons, skunks and specially deer. Deer are repeatedly observed feeding and roaming the property. There is even a famous albino doe which calls the local area home and have been seen even on the grounds.

Our individuals have their privacy, but they should not be made invisible. They are a part of our community that should not be removed and hided away out of sight. They should be a visible part of our community, for it is their community also. Centralia is their home and Centralia is a better place because of special individuals. I know I am a better person for working with and around them for last 20 years.

Brian Aldrich
P.O. Box 283
411 N. James Ave.
Centralia, IL 62801

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Aldrich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent 'B' at the beginning.

March 24, 2012

COGFA

703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Commission Members:

My name is Dedra Koehler and I am an employee (supervisor in dietary) of W.G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. I am writing to you to voice my opposition to the proposed closure of Murray Center.

Before working at Murray Center my husband and I owned a restaurant in Centralia, IL. I know first-hand the devastation of a major employer in the Centralia area being closed has on area businesses. My husband and I are still trying to recover from bankruptcy.

After losing our business, I went to work as an accounting supervisor at a workshop for the developmentally disabled. This workshop owned and operated several CILAs, so I am familiar with how they are funded and staffed. After working at Murray Center, I have now seen both sides of the debate.

I believe CILAs are good for high functioning individuals with minor behavior or health issues (by high functioning, I mean dressing, eating and grooming themselves and possibly being taught to self-medicate). A 1 or 2 staff to 8 residents ratio should be no problem.

But most of the behaviors and health issues at Murray Center are not minor. Some must be dressed, fed, and groomed. Others need 1 on 1 24-hour attention, so they do not harm themselves or others. There are some that need 24-hour nursing care to survive.

How can a CILA be better when this type of care is required? What happens when the State is late with funding payments or can't pay and the CILAs close; where do the individuals go then? Is it about the best care for the individuals or basic care at the lowest cost? Who has the right to put a price on a life?

Sincerely,



Dedra F. Koehler
96 Railroad St.
Boulder, IL 62231
E-mail: dedek@frontier.com

**MARION COUNTY COMMUNITY
MENTAL HEALTH (708) BOARD**

Marion County Courthouse
Salem, IL 62881

544 Kristy Drive
Centralia, IL 62801
618/533-5952
618/322-4141

RESOLUTION

Whereas the Marion County Community Mental Health (708) Board is charged with the responsibility of supporting and mentoring quality services for individuals with mental health, developmental disability and/or substance abuse issues; and,

Whereas a vital component of the service delivery system for persons with developmental disabilities in our community is the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center; and

Whereas the closure of Murray Center would have a devastating effect on the lives of the residents of Murray and their families; and

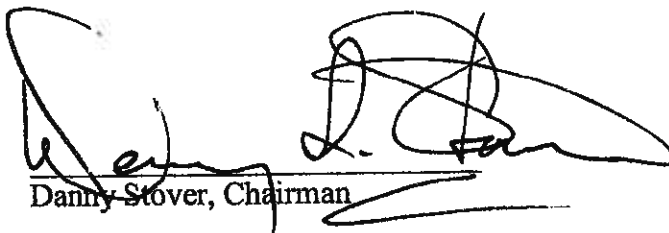
Whereas the closure of Murray Center would have an extremely detrimental effect on all aspects of our community due to the numbers of jobs lost and the overarching negative economic impact upon our community; therefore

Be it resolved, the Marion County Community Mental Health Board encourages the Governor of the State of Illinois to reconsider his decision to close the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center; and

Be it further resolved, the Marion County Community Mental Health Board encourages the Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability to NOT sustain the Governor's recommendation to close the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center; and

Be it further resolved, the Marion County Community Mental Health Board encourages both chambers of the Illinois Legislature to restore the funding for the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center.

Be it known by all who read this Resolution that it was passed unanimously by all members present, this First Day of March, 2012


Danny Stover, Chairman

3-1-2012

To Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability:

I am writing this letter in the proposed closer of State facilities. I am an employee at Warren G. Murray Center. This facility is a HOME to our individuals, not an institution. I have been employed there almost 2 yrs as an LPN and I have worked on all the cottages that house individuals. I have seen the interactions between staff and those who live there; it's as if we are all family. That is how we all treat each other, staff and individuals. I also have seen how some of the individual's behavior and medical needs are treated. Some of these individuals are not able to adapt to changes or to the settings out in the community on their own. Their families chose this home for a reason. I think they know what is best for their loved ones.

Also the effect it will have on the community is detrimental. It's not just going to affect the employees who work there; it will have a rippling effect on the community. Child care providers, local businesses, suppliers to many businesses. Even for those of us who have a college education it will still be a challenge to find jobs when there are so many of us unemployed and seeking work. Southern Illinois already has several people unemployed. Adding more to this area is just causing more traumas. If we are trying to get Illinois out of debt, how is unemploying so many people going to help. We will not be spending money that we do not have. I ask you to research into these matters and come to the right decision. Closing all the state facilities is NOT the right decision in my opinion. Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Jordan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



March 22, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
Attn: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL. 62706

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce to express our opposition to the closing of the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia Illinois. I am the Executive Director of The Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce and wish to testify at the public hearing.

We believe there are some very legitimate functions of government such as caring for the most vulnerable among us; such is the case with the Centralia residents currently served by a caring and compassionate staff at the Warren G. Murray Center. Furthermore, we believe it is the duty of every civilized society to provide for those least able through no fault of their own to care for themselves.

The wishes of the families of those served at Murray Center, and the residents themselves, need to be considered before disrupting their lives in an irreversible way. From the conversations I have had with the Murray Parents Association I have found a universal desire on the part of the residents and their family members to remain in their current homes.

We do not believe that the one on one care provided at Murray Center will ever be able to be matched at any other group home setting, even should such facilities be developed in the future. We are also perplexed as to how this will save the State of Illinois any money when the expenses of operating the facility are more than offset by Federal funding resulting in a net revenue gain for the state.

Closing Murray Center will have a devastating economic impact to our region. Our local current unemployment rate of 12.3% is one of the highest in the state. The direct loss of 550 jobs at Murray Center and the indirect job losses will only increase the cost to the state as a result of increased unemployment and health care benefits expenses. The state and all taxing bodies in the region would be adversely impacted by the ensuing reduction in sales and income tax such a closure would facilitate. In short, there is no economic case to be made for closing Murray Center

The Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce implores you to keep our fellow citizens, friends and family members, in their current homes at Murray Center. We have enclosed a copy of a Resolution adopted by the Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Sincerely,

Bob Kelsheimer
Executive Director

RESOLUTION NO. 1-2012

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE WARREN G. MURRAY CENTER

WHEREAS, Governor Quinn has initiated dialogue on the closure and/or reduction of services at Centers serving the developmentally disabled, and

WHEREAS, the closure of the Warren G. Murray Center would result in the displacement of 276 residents and directly impacting the lives of 225 families, and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois does not have viable alternative options of care for the residents upon their displacement, and

WHEREAS, the closure of the facility would result in the elimination of 600 jobs and a payroll of \$38.1 million in a region currently struggling with record high unemployment, and

WHEREAS, the facilities are in excellent condition with a physical layout that is conducive to this operation and certified for expansion possibilities of up to 400 residents,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE Greater Centralia Chamber of Commerce that

Section One: The Centralia Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors urges the State of Illinois to continue their financial commitment to the operations at Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia

Section Two: Due to the local economic climate, the Centralia Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors urges the State of Illinois to oppose consideration of the closure of the Warren G. Murray Center and consider expansion of services.

PASSED THIS 13th DAY of MARCH, 2012

Thomas W. Hawkins
Centralia Chamber of Commerce President

Attest:

Tom Kasten
Tom Kasten, Secretary/Treasurer

March 20, 2012

Dear Commission on Facility Closure,

I am writing on behalf of my uncle, David Burge, who lives in Apple Cottage at Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. He was born into a family of 13 children, and grew up on a farm east of Centralia. Two of his siblings are also developmentally disabled, and the older one lives at Bryan Manor in Centralia due to his physical needs, and one lives at a group home in Salem, IL.

All three of these developmentally disabled individuals lived at home until my grandfather passed away in 1978, and then one-by-one had to be placed outside the home as my grandmother could not care for them by herself. They were raised in a Christian home with a loving family, and 11 of the 13 Burge children are still living.

After my grandfather died, David thought he was the "man of the house" and became belligerent with my grandmother. He has always been afraid to ride in a car and does not like for people to wear eyeglasses. We believe he may have had someone in his childhood when he attended a special class and rode a school bus, that abused him. To this day we must all remove our eyeglasses prior to visiting him.

David was first placed at Anna Developmental Center in Anna, IL, and while living there suffered two broken arms, and at one point had a bruise on his chest in the shape of a man's shoe. This man was made to take a few days off work, and then was right back at work. My aunt, who is the legal guardian for David, began the procedure to get him moved away from Anna. We realize that he has some behavior problems, especially when made to ride in a car, but NO ONE deserves the physical abuse he suffered in Anna.

He was then transferred to Lincoln Developmental Center in Lincoln, IL where he was very happy and got along well. This was a great arrangement until one of our former governors closed this facility. The state then wanted to send David to a facility up in the Chicago area, and my aunt refused, stating "we don't have any family that far north to visit David".

We were elated when it was arranged for him to move to Murray Center as several of us live in or around Centralia, and that is the hub for our family. So any time one of his siblings or nieces or nephews comes home, they can easily spend time with David. He LOVES it at Murray Center and will say, "They nice!". "They help me". David is allowed to eat his meals in his room where he can watch TV (which he enjoys greatly), and only leaves his room for a shower or to take a phone call from family. He has lived at Murray for about 10 years, and we were devastated to hear that this facility might be on Governor Quinn's chopping block! I live in Marion, IL, and am troubled by the news of a possible prison closing or juvenile center closing, but my sympathies are with the

workers there and not the residents. This is NOT there home, but only where they are being held due to their actions. They can be relocated to other places if needed.

But Murray Center residents did NOTHING to deserve to be born the way they were, and this is their HOME. They have bonded with the workers, and most of them are very routine-oriented and feel comfortable there. Some of them could be greatly traumatized by leaving their home, and some of them would suffer due to their multiple health needs.

I am asking you to PLEASE reconsider and NOT close Murray Center. PLEASE look for other alternatives!! My uncle cannot go to a group home as they are made to go to sheltered workshop, and he will not ride in a car or bus. His behavior is very good at Murray, and he loves it there.

Please see the faces behind the people housed at Murray Center....they all have their unique story. I only know my uncle's story, and am being a voice for him.

Thank you for your consideration, and I hope to hear that Murray Center will be open and a home for my Uncle David for the rest of his life.

Sincerely,

Norma Kramer
1403 N. Magnolia Avenue
Marion, IL 62959

Subject: Murray Center
From: Bobbi Gormann (bgormann@yahoo.com)
To: facitlityclosure@ilga.gov;
Date: Thursday, March 22, 2012 12:45 AM

My name is Bobbi Gormann. I am an Opponent of the closing of Murray Center. The type of Testimony I would like to give is Oral Testimony at the hearing as well as this written statement. I am a registered nurse at Murray Center. Ive worked there nearly 9 years. I work on Elm Cottage. We care for the most medically challenged individuals. They require 24 hour care. They cant feed themselves. Many are fed per Gastrostomy tubes. They are unable to do any basic care such as bathing and toileting or even reposition themselves. The State of Illinois ... for years have set standards for the level of care these individuals should get- and clearly we have done excellent in providing such care. How dare the State of Illinois evict these people from their homes and expect them to live with a much more lower standard of care? Over the years Ive seen "transition" happen... When we discharge our individuals to Nursing homes or Cilas...they die! And its usually within months. Please dont take away their homes.

Bobbi Gormann

Commission on Government Forecasting & Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

COGFA commissioners:

I am writing concerning the proposed closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. I am sure by now you have heard the many concerns that the citizens of this area have regarding the closing of this facility, the number one concern being the welfare of the facility's residents. Although that issue is at the forefront of my mind also, I know that sometimes merely showing compassion to the helpless isn't enough to fix the problems that the Illinois government is currently facing. I realize that sometimes politicians need more objective reasons for making a decision; doing what is best for the people of Illinois has to be based on more tangible evidence rather than what is more heartfelt. That being said, I would like to point out other areas of consideration that could prove to be very detrimental to this area of the state.

With the unemployment rate in Clinton County nearing 9 percent and the rate in Marion County in excess of 11 percent, this area cannot endure even a single job loss, let alone the 550+ that will occur if Murray Center closes. So many families in Southern Illinois are already struggling, trying to balance the ledger between food, healthcare, fuel for their vehicles, even clothes and shoes for their children... The loss of employment for these employees would also mean loss of health insurance, a costly consequence of closing Murray Center. Many fear that the closure of Murray Center will cause a mass exodus of citizens away from this area, turning Centralia and the surrounding region into a "ghost town" of sorts. The end of a facility this large could potentially mean an entire collapse for the region's economy.

Shutting down Murray Center would not affect just the people who are employed there; the devastating effects of an unfavorable decision would reach much, much further. The employees care about the quality of life that their residents experience while living at Murray Center. In an attempt to improve the milieu and make the "house" feel more like a "home," cottage leaders use part of their allotted monthly budget to purchase things like snack foods, music, special toiletry items, movies, games, and other similar products. They give this business to the local Wal-Mart, ALDI's, Dollar General, and other nearby stores. On the other side of town sits St. Mary's Good Samaritan Hospital, my current place of employment. Murray Center residents have a number of complicated medical issues; when they

fall ill, need x-rays or lab work, or even need doctor visits or an appointment with physical therapy, St. Mary's is where they go. We offer a variety of medical services, and there is not a day that goes by that our departments don't have the opportunity to welcome a Murray Center resident inside its walls. By and large, Murray Center utilizes us – takes their business to us – for the entirety of their residents' healthcare needs. Transportation of the Murray Center clientele is often provided by local EMS services. All of these organizations would suffer heavily from the loss of Murray Center, further hampering the already-weakened economy.

Rather than cutting costs by shutting Murray Center down for good, consider other, more constructive options. There are options other than putting helpless human beings' best interests at stake. There are options other than putting more than 550 people out of a job, all of which the state of Illinois will be paying unemployment to. There are options other than hastening the complete destruction of an already crumbling economy. Listening to the employees of Murray Center would procure many ideas for ways of slashing wasted money from the budget. At a time when Southern Illinois is facing such uncertainty, I hope you are willing to stand up for us, willing to stand up for the residents and employees of Murray Center. I hope you are willing to stand up and say, "No," to a proposal so dangerous and senseless. Thank you.

Sincerely, Paige Myers



20215 Boulder Rd.

Carlyle, IL 62231

pemyers93@yahoo.com

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

March 21, 2012

Dear Commissioner:

This letter is being written on behalf of my granddaughter, Lindsey Katherine Webb, a resident at Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois.

I would like to register my opposing the closing of Murray Development Center.

My granddaughter is behavior challenged. Earlier attempts to live in some type of group home has failed.

She and others like her need a structured life, with the kind of nurturing they receive at Murray Center. This closing would be devastating to the medically challenged residents, also.

My daughter is very concerned for Lindsey and all the residents, and their families, and the care givers, too.

Your kind consideration of my requests would be appreciated. Thank You!

Sincerely,

Teronica A. Wright

606 BORNMAN ST.

BELLEVILLE, IL 62220-2431

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

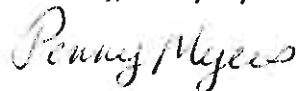
Dear Commissioners:

I am currently starting my twenty-first year as a mental health technician at Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. I hope to someday retire from Murray. Naturally, I oppose the closure. I don't want to lose my job, and I worry what the loss would mean for my family.

I am also very worried what the closure would mean for my Murray family. I take care of people who have very specific round-the-clock needs – people with such specific needs that only a home such as Murray can provide. I don't know of any other place that they could live and get the care they need. I don't want to see them or anyone else harmed, and that is truly what will happen.

The governor is not listening to the needs of my family. Please, I hope you do.

Sincerely, Penny Myers

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Penny Myers".

20215 Boulder Rd.

Carlyle, IL 62231

Commission on Government Forecasting & Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706
March 21, 2012

To the respected Commission members:

Senate Co-Chair Jeffrey Schoenberg (D) ; Senators Michael Frerichs (D) , Matt Murphy (R), Suzi Schmidt (R), Dave Syverson (R) , Donne Trotter (D)

House Co-Chair Patricia Bellock (R), Representatives Elaine Nekritz (D), Raymond Poe (R), Al Riley (D), Michael Tryon (R)

Dear Commission Members:

We are writing to you regarding the Murray Development Center in Centralia. The Murray Center has been housing mentally handicapped children since 1964, almost 50 years. Over the years, It has been a real blessing to hundreds upon hundreds of families and their precious children. There are currently about 275 residents and about 550 employees at the Murray Center.

Our town, Centralia, like so many other towns and cities in Illinois, has been hit especially hard for many years now. So many factories, as well as the I.C. R.R. car shops which employed so many workers, have shut down or moved out. And now, just this past month, we discovered that the State of Illinois Animal Disease Lab (in Centralia) is being shut down, the sorting operations for our Centralia Post Office is being transferred to Evansville, Indiana, and ---worst of all--- the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center for disabled children is in danger of being shut down. We understand this is something over which you have influence.

Please read the enclosed article from our local newspaper, *The Centralia Sentinel*. After reading the article carefully, also please look at the accompanying photo of 3 of the residents with their families at an outing they were recently able to attend.

You will notice the mother of one of the residents has been coming from Wheeler for the past 46 years to visit her daughter on Saturdays. In addition to these 3 residents, there are 272 more residents who rely on this facility. As well as 550 employees. If the Warren G. Murray Center is shut down, it will be a disaster for every one of these residents and their families--- if they still have family members--- as well as the entire city of Centralia.

Also, when you look at the picture in the enclosed article, please look closely at the frail young lady in the center of the photo. Obviously that young lady is not just a number or a statistic. She is a real person and she has come to know and trust those who care for her at the Murray Center. And yet, this home which is also home to 274 other handicapped individuals--- and the employees whom they know, trust and depend upon for their lives--- are right now being considered for elimination.

You have the power to make recommendations to the governor. In view of the facts, we certainly would hope that none of you want to be responsible for causing the Murray Center to be shut down. We are asking you to speak up for what is right and make your recommendation in favor of keeping Murray Development Center in operation.

I am sure that our Illinois governor could, if he chooses to do so, figure out quite a few alternate programs to cut that would save lots of money. There are so many other programs that are much more suitable to cuts and where the needs are not so great. **State Representative John Cavaletto has said that closing Murray Center makes no sense financially. "It's the only facility in the state of Illinois that doesn't lose money. It actually makes money because of the federal funds that**

come into it," Cavaletto said.

So now we are asking you to listen to your consciences and your hearts as you consider the effects your decision will have on lives of the 275 residents of Murray Center, 550 employees, the entire City of Centralia, and all the surrounding communities, as well as the entire State of Illinois.

Finally, In closing , please keep in mind an important quotation attributed to our Lord: "What you do to the least of my people, you do to me".

We thank you and we hope that our trust in each of you who serve on the commission will not be in vain.

Sincerely,



L. L. Kuhn family

7 Redwood Drive

Centralia, IL 62801

P.S. Also, for your information, we personally do not have a family member at Murray Center nor are we employed there. But we do recognize the terrible, terrible effects shutting down this very important facility will have on this entire area as well as the entire state.

Therapist cautions against Murray Ctr. closure

Professional provides insight into the impact closure could have on Murray Center residents and their families

BY MONICA SEALS
MARION COUNTY EDITOR

CENTRALIA — Providing counseling for residents of the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center, Tim Monken, M.A. LCPC began his career almost 20 years ago interning at the facility and has a special insight into the significant needs facing these unique individuals and how the potential closure of their home could affect their treatment and conditions.

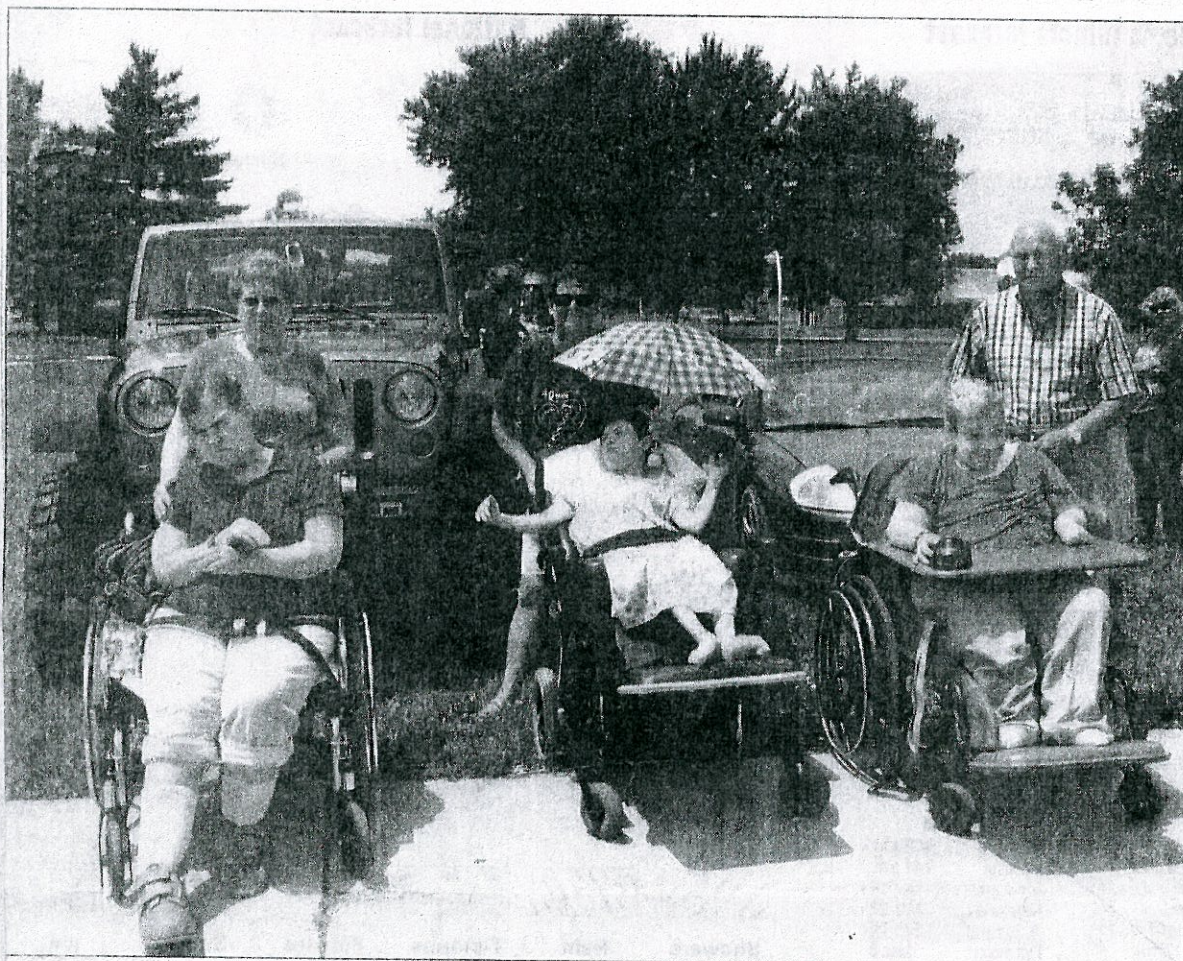
"They [residents] are very used to having a routine. The smallest thing could set them off," Monken began, explaining that the smallest changes in routine or surroundings can result in self-injurious behaviors or even behaviors that could injure others.

He says when many of the residents become upset, they will exhibit verbal outbursts that include screaming and making noises. But those behaviors can quickly escalate into self-injurious behavior that he says is common.

"Head banging and aggression toward staff or other residents would be common," he said, also noting a concern for pica, a self-injurious behavior in which the resident will eat items that can cause internal injuries.

Pica is seen as an extremely dangerous disorder frequently seen in people with developmental disabilities, such as autism.

Please see **Murray**, Page 5A



Sentinel File Photo

FAMILY VISITS — Warren G. Murray Center parents and their daughters are shown in front of two ABATE car show entries for a fun family photo. A forced closure of the facility would put an end to family events such as these. Seen in photo are, FROM LEFT, Shirley Rleman, who has been coming to the center from Wheeler for the past 46 years to visit every Saturday with her daughter, Jane Rleman; Vickie Vest with her daughter Mandle Vest; and Orval Williams with his daughter Kimberly Williams.

Murray: Page 5 A

Continued From Page 1A

Because many of the residents of Murray Center suffer from a pica disorder, Monken says one-on-one care is needed.

"At a CILA [Community Integrated Living Arrangements] facility there is usually about an 8-to-2 resident-to-staff ratio. At Murray, there is an increased need for staff because of these behavior disorders, such as pica and elopement," Monken explained.

When asked how many Murray Center residents would be able to transition into a CILA facility, Monken's estimates were not encouraging, as he believes less than 5 to 10 percent would be able to safely make the transition.

"Many of the people out there came from group settings where they were unable to safely function, and so they were sent to live at Murray where they would receive better care," he noted. "There are certain levels of structure these residents need and some need a very high level of structure."

ONE-ON-ONE CARE

Monken says many of the

Murray Center residents require one-on-one care because of pica and elopement issues and still others require two-on-one care because of violence toward themselves, other residents or staff.

Elopement issues arise when a resident walks away from the care center, placing themselves in possible danger.

According to Monken, any disruption in routine or surroundings dramatically increases the odds of these dangerous behaviors.

"They [residents] would become very distraught, and that would be very hard for some of them to work through. It's hard for many people to understand how a move like this, how a change like this could impact these residents. It would be like someone else losing everything they have or love to a fire," he said.

Without the cognitive abilities to understand what is happening to them, many of the Murray Center residents will have a difficult time overcoming a move to a different facility.

"Consistency is so important for them. If someone is not there for them, they take it very personally and will often act out. The staff at

Murray know each of these individuals and the specific needs and behaviors unique to each one," he said.

Moving them into a new setting would not only be traumatic for the individual, but valuable knowledge about their behaviors would be lost with the staff who are left behind.

"All experience and knowledge you have of these residents would be gone. All valuable information the Murray Center has on each individual would be gone, and you're going to have to start all over again," Monken said.

That knowledge, he noted, extends beyond the emotional and psychological needs of each resident, pointing to the profound medical issues facing a large number of the center's residents. He says the serious medical needs of many Murray Center residents would prohibit them from placement in a CILA facility.

In addition to the relationships the residents have built with the Murray Center staff, they have also built relationships with other residents and within the community.

"This would be like taking away your family members. This would be like someone coming in and saying they're

going to take your brother or your sister away. They have built relationships with the other residents, and many of them have built relationships working at Kaskaskia Workshop," he said, adding that many families have moved to the Centralia area to be near their loved ones, and those relationships would be compromised.

He says visits from family are a big part of the lifeline for the residents, who rely on regular visits from family to maintain consistency in their lives.

"We have to look at the implication a closure would have on families. Many people have moved to this area to be close to their loved ones and this [closure] would create a hardship for them," noted Monken, adding that the residents are accustomed to visits that maybe now come once a week. He said if the residents are moved three hours away, those visits may only be possible once a month. That disruption in routine could result in dangerous behaviors by the resident.

"We sometimes have to protect these individuals from themselves," he said. "We have to keep them safe both medically and mentally."

mseals@morningsentinel.com

(ADDITIONAL INSIGHT INTO MURRAY CENTER)

Murray Center reaches out to wheelchair-bound residents

Unique program creates customized chairs for improved comfort

BY STEVEN STILT

SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

CENTRALIA — For more than a decade, Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia has been the home of one of the most unique medical programs in the state of Illinois.

Former physical therapy aide Helen Kuester says the center began creating custom wheelchairs for all chair-bound residents in 1999.

According to Kuester, each resident is lifted onto a simulator, which mimics the shape of the body. "It molds kind of like a Play-

Dough, it molds around to fit the person," she explained.

A plaster cast is placed over the mold, and the cast is then sent to a instrument known as a duplicator, developed at the Murray Center.

"The duplicator cuts the foam that mimics the plaster cast. This foam is vacuum-formed with the fabric and goes around the molded plastic. ... The finished product will be just like what was simulated," Kuester explains in an email to the Sentinel.

The end result is a wheelchair designed to conform to each resident's body structure, including their trunk, shoulders, and legs.

Each wheelchair is also customized to fit the residents' aesthetic tastes. "If a person says they like blue, they can have it in blue. Or there's burgundy, or a

Please see **Wheelchair**, Page 3A

March 16, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

Please consider this my written testimony in opposition to the closure of Murray Center.

The majority of the residents at this center are either medically-challenged or behaviorally-challenged making them unlikely candidates for placements in CILA homes, group homes, or ICF/DD homes. Staff ratios at these types of homes are not sufficient to care for this very complicated population. Over the course of the last several years, some of our residents have transitioned to these types of homes (CILA, ICF/DD, group), only to return to Murray Center when the staff at these homes are unable to manage their behaviors. Those medically-challenged residents would not have the needed medical staff available to them, that Murray Center provides. This would only lower their chance of survival in these types of homes.

This type of population does not adapt well to change. Small changes are very large obstacles for them, setting off behaviors, weight gain/loss, illnesses, etc. Over half of the population of Murray Center has lived at this center for 20 years or more, with almost 70 of those residents having lived here for 40+ years. This would be taking them out of the home they have known for over 40 years.

The economic impact of the closure of Murray Center would be huge, as it is the third largest employer in this area. The present unemployment is already an astounding 12% in Marion County. This center's closure would force unemployment even higher; affecting businesses and services in the area. Many businesses would not survive, which in turn would cause more unemployment in this already economically depressed area.

Please consider these facts before making a decision to close Murray Center.

Submitted by:



Earl Jones
308 W. McCord
Centralia, IL 62801
earljones49@gmail.com

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioner:

I am writing on behalf of Lindsey Katherine Webb, a resident at Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois.

I would like to register my opposition to the closure of Murray Developmental Center.

The majority of residents at this center are either medically-challenge or behaviorally-challenged making them unlikely candidates for placements in CILA homes, group homes, or ICF/DD homes. Lindsey falls into the group of behaviorally-challenged. Attempts at community placements earlier in her life have failed. Her behaviors were too difficult for the very limited staff to handle. She was then over medicated, regressed significantly, and was repeatedly hospitalized. Staff ratios at these types of homes are not sufficient to care for this very complicated population. I have seen cottage mates of Lindsey's transitioned to these types of homes (CILA, ICF/DD, group), only to return to Murray Center when the staff at these homes are unable to manage their behaviors. They come back having lost any ground they have gained over years the structure, stability, and nurturing they received at Murray Center. This type of population does not adapt well to change. Small changes are very large obstacles for them, triggering behaviors that can inflict injury to themselves and those around them.

There are also those at Murray Center that are medically-challenged. These disorders cover a wide range, from diabetes, seizure disorders, paralysis and even HIV-AIDS. I know this because of the bond I share with other parents and guardians that have children, sisters, or brothers at Murray Center. It is much more than a state institution. It is a family that loves, supports, and cares for those folks that society deems disposable. It would be cruel to take these fragile individuals from the only home some of them have known for their entire life.

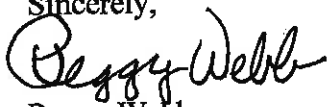
Last, but not least would be the dire economic impact that would result from the closure of this facility. This area of Illinois is already suffering from high unemployment. This center's closure would force unemployment even higher: affecting businesses and services in the area.

It is difficult to express the fear I have as the mother of a special needs child. I know I will not always be here to look out for her. Knowing Lindsey's life was in place, she had a place to live, she had her workshop to go to, and she was above all safe with caring people, allowed me to focus on the time we have together weekly. I knew in my heart, if

something happened to me, she would be ok. Now there is just the nagging fear of
....what if?

I ask you to please consider these facts before making a decision to close Murray Center.
May God guide and bless you as you hold the future of my child in your hands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peggy Webb". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Peggy Webb

401 Blue Ridge Dr.
Belleville, IL 62223
Peggy_webb@att.net

Please do not close Murray
Center! My dad will lose his job.
Those people who live there love
it. It's their home! Our whole
community is suffering already.
Please vote to keep Murray.

Thank You
Jaclyn Bowerman

FACILITY: Murray Developmental Center

POSITION: Opponent to Closure-to be posted

To Whom It May Concern:

3/19/12

My name is Megan Humphrey. I am a senior at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in the social work program. I have been here at Murray Center doing my internship with the social workers since August 2011 and will remain here till May 2012. I am writing this for your support to keep the doors to Warren G. Murray Developmental Center open. Murray Center is a home to many individuals who need the support of the center. Many are unable to live in the community. They would be too vulnerable in society and this is not safe.

It is important to keep Murray Center open for the continuing training for students. They provide on the job experience for social work programs along with nursing, radiology, cosmetology, psychology, etc. I have learned a lot about the care that is needed to be done for the individuals. One task that I have provided assistance with is placement for the residents into the community. At times, this can be difficult when the group homes say they are unable to provide the needed services to the individual. It has been said that anyone with a disability is able to live in the community. I have seen this not be true. Some residents have been transferred to the community but a few months later they are brought back to Murray Center. What will happen if Murray Center closes and an individual does not succeed at a group home? Where will they go? The individuals who are unable to live in the community need to live at Murray Center for their quality of life. Murray Center provides the support and structure that is needed in their lives. It would be detrimental to some if they had to be transitioned to a whole new home with new staff.

For about five years I worked in a 16 bed ICF/DD facility. I do believe that for some, a group home is a positive thing. But not everyone is able to live in the community due to extreme behaviors or medical issues. At times at the group home there was no structure. It was hard to keep staff. The turnover rate was extremely high. This is not good for the well being of individuals. They need to see the same faces everyday. They have already experienced so many hardships in their lives. They do not need to suffer anymore because a group home can not remain constant. Some days I was alone with 16 residents. That is not fair to the residents. One person is not capable of providing the needs to all the individuals. Stress can take a person over causing them to not perform their job to the highest potential. At Murray Center, staffs are always available to the residents. If an issue arises with a resident and only one person is available at a group home then the individual has to do what they say. At Murray Center there are plenty of staff to help resolve an issue if it does occur. Structure is important to the lives of the residents. The staff at Murray Center seems to remain the same so the residents always see a familiar face.

Finally, think about the families of the individuals who live at Murray Center. They have trusted Murray Center with the care of their loved ones. Many family members have expressed that they do not want their loved ones to be placed in the community. They find the care at Murray Center is above and beyond what they community homes can offer.

Again, I ask you for your support to not close Murray Center. This is a HOME not just a state facility. Several hundreds will be hurt but this closure including families, residents, staff, and the city of Centralia. I will be looking forward to hearing from you. I can be reached at mehumph@siue.edu.

Sincerely,



Megan Humphrey
Social Work Intern, SIUE
mehumph@siue.edu
Trenton, IL

March 19, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Name: Stacia Woods on behalf of my son Rigney Sanders
Facility Being Closed: Warren G Murray Developmental Center
Position: Opponent
Type of testimony: Written Statement filed
Email: staciawatson@sbcglobal.net

I am writing on behalf of my son and the residents of Murray Center asking that the CGFA committee votes No on Governor Quinn's plan to close this wonderful place. This is my son's story:

My son, Rigney is Severely and Profoundly Mentally Retarded and Autistic. Before his admission to Murray Center, he was aggressive towards others, he would strike himself in the head, punching and kicking holes in the walls of our home when he became upset. At school, he would have to be physically restrained by the staff up to 35 times a month because of trying to injury himself. Because of the medication he took, it caused tremendous weight gain which compromised his respiratory system, which resulted in him being placed on medications to help him breath. Rigney is unable to speak and could not even chew his food. He was on a semi-liquid diet. Even with my education, I am a Clinical Nurse Specialist, and giving Rigney the best community care resources available, he destroyed our home and was admitted to Murray Center for a 4 month stay in 2004. Unfortunately Rigney when he returned home, he returned to his previous behaviors and he physically assaulted his caregiver. For his safety and the safety of others, he was placed at Murray Center in 2005.

Murray Center staff saved my son, Rigney's life. He is now on the right medication and has decreased his episodes of injuring himself and others. He is learning to sign and they are teaching him how to chew food. This is only because of the care of Murray Center. Murray Center's dedicated staff care for and are able to provide a safe, environment for Rigney. It is because of their expertise and training, Rigney is able to thrive. Murray Center is his home. Rigney can NOT survive out of this type of environment. It has given me peace to know my son is safe and well taken care of.

PLEASE, Vote no to Governor Quinn's plan to close Murray Center. Thank you.

Sincerely Rigney's mom,



Stacia Watson Woods

Dear CGFA:

A letter has come to our home saying that Murray Center in Centralia is going to close. I know that most states have closed their facilities similar to Murray. I understand that this sort of facility is not necessarily seen as a proper undertaking for the states, as opposed to non-profit or for-profit agencies. This all sounds good on paper and is politically popular.

The problem is that Murray is an exceptionally good facility for a certain population of developmentally handicapped individuals--ones in need of more intensive and extensive care than the average.

Our daughter resided in three ICFDDs prior to Murray. Each one had the same problem: her disabilities were so challenging that the facility could not genuinely meet her needs, each facility resorted to added medication in an attempt to help her adapt, and she did not respond well to the medications. She had a near-fatal reaction to medication at the third ICFDD and was hospitalized for weeks.

At that time it was recommended that we consider Murray. Because of prior informational meetings given by the school district our daughter attended, we had a very negative view of state operated facilities and did not want to consider such a placement. We finally agreed to a meeting with the staff from Murray, some professionals from her previous facility, and medical personnel who were very familiar with her.

We were astonished at the understanding of her problems and the wisdom in how to handle her. The Murray staff demonstrated in that meeting. For the first time in her life we had professionals who could cheerfully face the challenges her care would entail without denial of the seriousness of her problems or threats that if she did not improve she would have to leave yet another facility--

AND THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IN MANY AREAS IMPROVEMENT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE OR EXTREMELY SLOW AND DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE but that Murray would accept her for who and what she is and help her be her best. This has been the best environment our daughter could be in--accepting but encouraging.

I do not want to see such a professional and caring and SUCCESSFUL facility closed when the most challenged and challenging of Illinois's residents need the care it provides.

Do not balance the budget of Illinois on the backs of its most vulnerable citizens. Murray is not just another facility, whose residents can easily be accepted into other facilities and thrive. Murray has many "hard cases" who need to be there for months, to get rehab so they can go to group homes or ICFDDs, or who need to be there for decades, even a lifetime, because their needs are so challenging that they do not "fit" in facilities with less round-the-clock staffing, fewer professionals in house, or budgetary concerns which limit the staff-to-client ratio.

It has been an enormous relief to our daughter to be in a housing situation where her genuine, challenging, critical needs can be met without uproar or recrimination. Her medication load was reduced, her seizure activity decreased extremely dramatically, and she could enjoy life again. I wish we could care for her at home--but that is not possible. I would love it if she could adjust to a local group home or ICFDD, but the chances are worse than slim. Murray is her home and does a better job than her father and I could, or than any other facility we have ever heard of or seen, short of extremely high-end private facilities (which the state is welcome to pay for after they discover she cannot be cared for via group homes or ICFDDs).

Sandra Kubbs 2805 Carrelton Dr, Champaign IL 61821 akubbs@comcast.net 217-356-3696



328 S. Vincent
Salem, IL 62881-1831
vikkijeanne@yahoo.com

20 March 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting & Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

To Whom It May Concern:

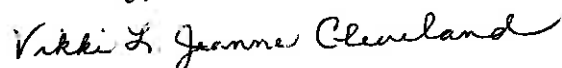
Recently I took an online survey about the Illinois lottery. In the area where I was to declare my location within the state, I was given three choices: Chicago, Chicagoland, Rest of State. Apparently this is the mentality of too many people making decisions within this state. The farther from Chicago we are, the less we are considered favorably in state decisions.

I realize that the state is in severe financial trouble. I won't dwell on the point that those most responsible for this trouble are those who must now sacrifice the least. What galls me is that those who are LEAST responsible will be suffering most if the disproportionate number of closures happens in this area.

The federal government is already closing a postal station in Centralia. Now the state also wants to close a department of human services office, a state agricultural lab, and Murray Center. Beyond the fact that these closures will hurt an already economically disadvantaged area, in the case of Murray Center you will also be closing the home of many, many residents—some of whom face the horrible possibility of becoming homeless.

I don't claim to have the answers to the economic crisis in Illinois. However, those making the decisions apparently don't either. What I do know is that some fairness, understanding, compassion, and common sense need to become part of the process. When you decide to close this and reduce that, start with those who can most afford the hits—and those who are responsible for the mess in the first place.

Sincerely,



Vikki L. Jeanne Cleveland

March 19, 2012

**Commission on Government Forecasting
And Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in opposition to the possible closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. I have read the public comments to date and they are all great comments with statistics and facts that should have an impact on your decision. I would like to approach my comments from the position of a Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother. I know that security and stability are so important to all children. They rely on the safety of their home and those they are closest to and those that love and care for them. I can't imagine someone coming in for financial reasons and taking one of my children or grandchild from the safety of the only home they have ever known or the only people that have ever cared for them. I ask that you consider all sides of this issue. Absorb the facts that have been given to you, but please, please do not ignore the human side of this issue. This would have a very negative impact on the lives of these families.

**Thank you,
Melinda Redmond, Centralia Township Assessor**

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Melinda Redmond", written in dark ink.

Dear Legislator: *Commission on Government Forecasting
& Accountability*

Governor Quinn is planning the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. This facility serves the most fragile, developmentally disabled citizens of our state. These residents require around the clock care for their very basic needs. Many need to be fed, bathed, dressed, and need constant supervision. The center is also home to many residents with very severe emotional and psychological needs. Due to the professional care they receive from the staff at Murray Center, they have been able to thrive and become part of not just the Murray Center community, but also our local communities. They are involved in activities in the community and have become our friends and neighbors.

The center is home to almost 300 residents and provides jobs to over 500 people. The loss of Murray Center will not only cause the loss of these 500 jobs, but more importantly will take away these residents' home. For many of these residents Murray Center has been their home for over 30 years. Do not take away their home and the livelihood of over 500 people.

We demand that you vote to keep Murray Center open and adequately funded so these very vulnerable citizens of Illinois can continue to be productive, happy, and safe. It is your responsibility and job to make the right, moral decision for these residents.

Remember.....what if this were your child? Every one of these residents is someone's loved one. Don't take away their home!!!!!!

*Enclosed is a letter written by my
Co-worker, which could easily change
trying to close Murray Center.*
KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN AND FUNDED!

REMEMBER.....IT IS SOMEONE'S HOME!!!!!!



Mary Hohkamp
1203 S Brookside St.
Centralia, IL 62801



618-533-1694

'Please, don't close my home'

BY DAVE AND DORIS
FLORCZYK

CONCERNED PARENTS OF A
MURRAY CENTER RESIDENT

Hi, My name is Donny Florczyk. I am asking everyone to help me so that I am able to stay in my home at Murray Center. I am 28 years old and I cannot walk or talk. I cannot feed myself or clean myself. I depend on others to take care of everything for me. To think of having to leave my home is like a nightmare for me. How will I know that the people who are supposed to care for me won't end up hurting me. Who would know if they did? Please help me so that I can stay in the home with a family I love and know that I can lay my head down at night and feel safe, secure and love."



Donny Florczyk

These are words our son might use to persuade Governor Quinn from closing Murray Center if only he could speak for himself.

Join us together with our son in the fight for his very life and the many lives who call Murray Center their home. It's hard to even imagine that the governor could have the heart to force people such as these out of their home. What about their rights and their free-

GUEST COMMENTARY

doms? Should they not have a choice of where they want to live like the rest of us? The government should never have that kind of power to dictate where our loved ones live and where they feel is the safest and best place for their needs. They did not choose this life of being imprisoned inside a crippled body that they can never escape from. It is up to us to let their voices be heard and to make sure that their rights are never compromised. We are asking you to write to the governor and all legislators. You can also call them. Also, secondary to the people who directly depend on the services provided at Murray Center is our very own communities. We need to keep the few jobs that we have left. Printed below is a letter I have written to the governor. Thank you very much.

Governor Quinn:

I am writing to express my concerns on the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

My son Donny is 28 years old and has lived at Murray Center for the last 14 years. He has many struggles and diagnosis that range from Cerebral Palsy to being legally blind. Have you ever stopped to think and ask yourself why? Why does God cre-

ate some of us with able bodies that work properly and others who face many challenges, both physically and mentally. I have asked myself that question and I have asked God that question and this is the answer I hear back. "I have given you this treasure. What are you going to do to help him. How far will you go to give him the very best that this place can offer?"

During your budget briefing, your Chief of Staff, Jack Lavin, reports, and I quote, "Closing Murray Center will result in increased quality of life for those individuals." My question to you is how do you make a decision about someone's quality of life looking at the outside walls of Murray Center from your office in Springfield? We invite you, Governor Quinn, to step out of your office and walk into the world and INSIDE the walls of Murray Center so you can see for yourself the faces and the lives of whom you're dealing with. Don't send members of your staff. Just simply bring yourself. Don't stop at the Administration Building. Walk cottage to cottage and see for yourself this very special and very needy population whose disabilities range from severe behavioral challenges, to the very medically fragile and with serious and life threatening diseases, to the deaf and blind, to the brokenness that lie in those beds and sit in those wheelchairs. Arm yourself with the truth before you decide that a population such as these could possibly find a greater quality of life out in the community.

The people who live at Murray Center have a purpose in life.

God does not make mistakes. They are perfectly and wonderfully made in His sight and by His hands, and He is speaking to us, and to the State of Illinois. "I have given you this treasure. How far will you go to protect them and give them the very best life this place can offer?"

What about you Governor Quinn? How do you answer that question? Will you abandon them for the sake of money or politics?

If there were a better place don't you think that we as their parents and guardians would not have already examined all the options and possibilities? Murray Center is not just a building. It is a family, a community, a home for our sons and daughters, brothers and sisters. Many of them would not have survived this long without the exceptional care they receive from Murray Center, and to make them leave their home will undoubtedly be devastating to their health and well being and bring about a change that many of them may not recover from.

One last thought, I ask you to put yourself in their places, and in ours. What if someone made a decision that involved you and your loved one. A decision that takes you out of your home and away from your family and you were completely helpless to stop it. What if life handed you or your loved one a profound disability or a horrible accident? What if YOU needed the services that Murray Center offers in the future? We need to keep Murray Center open and thriving for us now and for our future citizens. Thank you very much.

Greg Beaty
502 S Davis
Centralia, IL 62801

March 18, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton building
Springfield, IL 62706

Commissioners:

My name is Greg Beaty. I am a resident of Centralia, IL. I am a Pharmacist and have been the Director of Pharmacy at Murray Center for 24 years. I am responsible for the medication distribution at Murray Center. During my time there, I have come to see some alarming trends. For Example, when we get a new admission or in some cases a readmission from a group home or a CILA, they usually come to us dramatically over medicated. We spend an extended period of time, depending on the case, getting these individuals medications lowered to the lowest amount possible. This can take many months to years to achieve.

The reason we are able to do this is because of the great staff we have at Murray Center. As we slowly lower these doses, we are able to have one staff member on one individual or two staff members on one individual if needed. I do not believe this will happen at a CILA because they will not have the staff numbers or resources available. Instead, I believe, you will see an increase in medication and a resulting decrease in their quality of life.

As a society, we have come to believe that there is a medication for everything. I do not believe this is so. Medication, especially for behavior, is just one piece of the puzzle. A caring staff, a safe environment, a routine, and behavior modifying approaches are also pieces of the puzzle.

Many of the individuals at Murray Center have lived there for years or most of their lives. They are accepted in the community. This is their home. I also believe that if there was a better choice for those living at Murray Center that their Parents/Guardians would have already made that choice for them. I believe that Murray Center should remain open for the valuable services it gives to the individuals that live there.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Beaty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Greg" and last name "Beaty" clearly distinguishable.

Greg Beaty RPh

March 16, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

The closure of Murray Center is not only detrimental to the area, but also will be a tragedy in the lives of the residents currently occupying Murray Center. The transition will disrupt any progress they have made there. The population of Murray Center is not suitable to inhabit other types of facilities. The move to other state facilities would be harmful to the residents and their families because visits would be made very difficult or impossible due to the distance to either Anna or Kankakee.

The current economic situation in Centralia is very poor. The current unemployment rate is 11.5-12%. Closing this facility would increase that rate, being as Murray is the third largest employer in the three surrounding counties, including: Clinton, Marion, and Washington. For every person who loses their job, area businesses lose a family of customers and families lose an income. The domino effect continues to affect the businesses in the area as former employees of Murray Center have to relocate or rely on unemployment and welfare. But, obviously, the bigger problem is relocating the residents of Murray Center.

During the time at Murray Center, psychologists and behavioral analysts work with residents and develop behavior intervention plans. These plans would be interrupted and the structure the residents are used to would be demolished. The small things, such as a regular worker not being there or a bedroom change could be a huge disruption in their lives. So, my question for you is: Can you imagine the effects of moving them to a facility completely different in structure, with completely new staff, with low staff to resident ratios?

The major problem with moving the residents into CILA and group homes is the low staff to resident ratio. The workers at said homes have high staff turnover rates because of the lower wages. The types of residents at Murray Center require much supervision, several requiring 1:1 staff to resident ratio. This could not be accomplished at the CILA and ICF/DD homes.

Roughly, 70 of the 275 residents have lived at Murray Center for more than forty years, so transitioning them out would be very difficult, disrupting the only lives they have known. This is extremely hard for their families, also, as many of the parents/guardians have been so satisfied with the care they receive at Murray Center and have for

so many years. The residents also benefit socially and emotionally from visits from their families and moving the residents a minimum of two hours away will likely decrease the number of visits families can make.

I ask you to reconsider closing Murray Center. It is valuable to the residents who live there, their families, the employees, the economic well being of Centralia and the surrounding areas.

Signed,
Ellen Lueking



116 South Oak Street

PO Box 122

Hoffman, IL 62250

d_lueking41@hotmail.com

COGFA Commission:

Closing Murray Center is the biggest mistake that any one person could do. I would like to express my concerns about this closure. The 275 residents that live at Murray Center calls this their home. It's not just buildings. Most of the staff feel this job is rewarding and thank God that they can help people that are less fortunate than us. We not only help them; we are their honorary family members to each other. It is wrong, careless, and negligent to believe that when dealing with the developmentally disabled that there is a one size fits all solution. Nursing homes, Assisted Living, and CILA's are good for those who fit into such categories, but the residents at Murray Center have multiple disabilities, disorders, diseases, etc. whose lives depend upon the professional, round the clock care, strict monitoring of medications and diets that these people need, deserve, and receive at Murray Center.

When asked about my feelings on this proposed closure my response is, "Don't worry about me, I will land on my feet, but please, pray for those people who live there. They have nowhere else to go." I'm asking you to do the same. It's not about the job, it's about the lives of those whose whole life is Murray Center and depends on Murray Center. It is your job to protect these people and to protect the rights of these most vulnerable citizens of Illinois. I pray that you will do the right thing. Please, be a voice for those who have none and vote to save their home!

Thank you very much!

Sincerely,
Patty Wiebler

Patty Wiebler
Murray Center employee

Dear Commission members,

Thank you so much for taking the time to read the thoughts of those of us who will be impacted by the decision to close Inu Center in Centralia.

As a life long resident of Centralia, and a retired support service staff at the center my thoughts are somewhat personal.

I spent 18 years of my life tending to the dietary and the clothing needs of the precious people who reside there.

Some with such fragile health we do not think they would survive a move.

Thanks to the excellent medical care and

love they receive, they experience life more abundant than even their families could provide.

Please do not allow these individuals to be uprooted from the only



love some of them have ever known.
And suggested from people that they
look upon as their family and friends.

They need the special care both physical
and spiritual that they receive from the
Murray Center staff who know them so
well.

Some with special needs, and all have
their own personality. Please have compassion
on them and their families. Do not allow
God to allow to do this terrible thing.

Sincerely,

Barbara Daniel

1114 Bond St.

Centerville, Ill.

62801



March 12, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton building

Springfield, IL 62706

This letter is to voice my opposition to the plans for closing Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL.

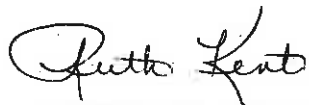
I have worked at Murray Center in a professional capacity for 34+ years and am in the process of retiring. I am familiar with the individuals served and what their needs are especially in regard to behavior management. Many of the individuals that have been admitted within the last 10 years have come from community settings. Their placements were unsuccessful often because of behavioral issues. Behavior programs in community homes often gave "call 911" as an intervention which would result in the police intervening. A trip to or stay in the psychiatric ward of the local hospital often occurred as a result of police intervention with a change in or addition to medications. Individuals admitted from some of the community settings receive multiple medications to address psychiatric and behavioral issues without data to support the use of the medications.

Staff at Murray Center are trained in how to manage extreme behaviors. The behavioral incidents are addressed at the time that they occur and often before the behavior escalates without calling the police and having to admit the individual to a psychiatric unit in the hospital. Medications are closely monitored when used, and the individual is provided the supports necessary for structuring their time in a positive and productive manner.

Please reconsider the closure of Murray. Murray provides the supports necessary to individuals with maladaptive behaviors to help them feel better about themselves and set and accomplish goals. Community settings are not available in this area (or perhaps anywhere in the state) at present to meet the needs of many of the individuals who live at Murray.

The loss of Murray would be devastating to the community but especially so to the individuals who call Murray Center home. Murray Center is an integral part of the community, and the individuals living at Murray take part in many of the community functions. Please reconsider this closure plan. It is not in the best interests of the individuals.

Sincerely,



Ruth Kent

3450 State Rt 161

Centralia, IL 62801

COLDWELL BANKER Allen & Geary

Nancy Siegmund

117 N Hickory

Centralia, IL 62801

Dear Sirs:

Please reconsider closing Murray Center. It would be very disturbing to the residents to be uprooted from the home that is familiar to them and their families.

In addition, please take into consideration the economic impact this closure will have on the 4 county area, which already has experienced many business and commercial losses.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Siegmund". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'S'.

Nancy Siegmund

P. O. Box 343
209 South Broadway
Hoffman IL 62250
March 9, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield IL 62706

Dear Members of CGFA,

My 9-year old nephew Johnny Ray Alvey was struck by a car, several years ago, the result of which left him comatose/semi-comatose, totally handicapped and unable to function.

His parents and siblings were living in Indiana at the time. Both parents were working to support their family.

When it became evident to the physicians that Johnny Ray would be unable to come out of his coma, to function normally, he was scheduled to be discharged from the hospital the Public Aid Dept. (?) (the State of Indiana) was going to place 9-year old Johnny Ray in a nursing home located 2 - 3 hours from where his family was living. With both parents working this would have caused a hardship for them to visit with Johnny Ray on a regular basis, adding to an already highly emotional situation.

Since Johnny Ray's mom (my sister) was a former Illinois resident, the family moved to the Centralia IL area in order that Johnny Ray could be admitted to Warren G. Murray Center. He became a resident at Warren G. Murray Center where he lived for 7 years, lying comatose/semi-comatose in his bed, totally helpless...where he lived in a safe environment, receiving tender loving care from the people/staff members who worked on Grape Cottage/his unit, through the time when Johnny Ray died.

I worked in the Business Office at Murray Center and every Monday, Wednesday and Friday I spent my morning break sitting or standing at his bedside, talking to him, touching him. It was an emotionally draining time; I cried during and after every visit. But Johnny Ray was and always had been a special child to me.

My sister and the other children visited Johnny Ray as frequently as they were able...after work, after school and weekends.

Without Warren G. Murray Center I don't know how the family would have been able to take care of him.

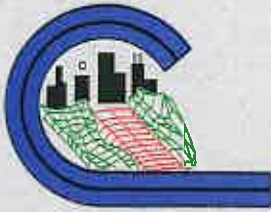
Since Murray Center has been home for many, many special needs, physically and mentally, children and adults unable to live at home with their families, I cannot visualize what would happen if Murray Center were to close.

Murray Center residents will become "displaced persons" if Murray Center is closed. Additionally, the 550 (+ -) employees will become "displaced persons" in an already economically depressed area, as they join the ranks of the unemployed. Jobless claims rose another 8,000 last week.

550 jobs chopped to save money for the State of Illinois? Murray Center residents placed in privately-owned care facilities to save the State of Illinois money?

Sincerely,

Agnes G. White
Agnes G. White



CURL & ASSOCIATES, INC.

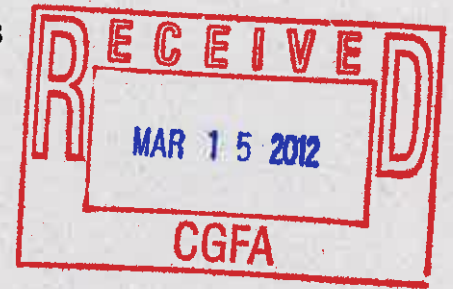
CONSULTING ENGINEERS • LAND SURVEYORS

226 E. Broadway, P. O. Box 1349

Centralia, Illinois 62801

Phone (618) 533-4149 • Fax (618) 533-3723

March 14, 2012



State of Illinois
Commission of Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners,

As a resident of Centralia for more than 35 years and as the owner of a local engineering and surveying firm for more than 30 years, I implore you to reconsider your announcement to commence the process of closing the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center, due to its impact on the residents and the community.

Not only is the service provided by Murray Center an emotional issue for the Murray residents, in many cases it is the only home they know. The parents of these residents have relied on the services that Murray provides, the kind of care that they are unable to provide due to the special needs of these Murray residents. For many of these parents, they have moved from their original homes and taken up residency in Centralia and the surrounding nearby communities to be near their loved ones.

As direct result of the potential closing, the City of Centralia and the surrounding communities, as well as every business and retail establishment, are now faced with the specter of losing not only the Murray residents but also the Murray residents families who must now pull up stakes and move again to a new community to be near their relocated family members. In addition, due to the likelihood that many of the lost jobs will require those Murray employees to move out of town to find new employment, this will require them to sell their homes in an economy that is already flagging. My concern is that there will no one to buy those homes.

Adding in the lost jobs and their corresponding salaries will result in loss of \$20 million to the local economy. When you factor in that every dollar is spent 6 to 7 times before it leaves the community, the expected \$120 million loss to the local economy is devastating. Its impact will be felt by every retailer, as well as professionals such as doctors, attorneys, accountants, engineers, surveyors, and realtors. Similarly, the City of Centralia and the surrounding communities will suffer, due to the reduction of real estate taxes and sales tax.

I am concerned that the immediate impact of Murray's closing will lead to an inevitable decline in the local economy that will result in lost population, lost income, lost homes, and subsequent closure of retail stores, restaurants, as well as service industry businesses. That decline would affect the local economy for more than 10 years.

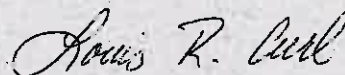
The local economy is so fragile, I am also fearful about the long term impact of this loss. To my recollection, we have experienced at least 4 different occasions in the past 25 years in which more than 500 jobs were lost due to plant or office closure in Centralia alone. Each time our ability to absorb those losses and recover has diminished. Because we have so many major industries and offices close their doors in the past 25 years, the impact of closing Murray Center may be so significant our local economy may never recover.

As you review the decision to close Murray Center, I respectfully request you consider all the peripheral issues including its negative impact on the Murray residents, their families, the employees and their families, the lost revenue to the City of Centralia and the surrounding communities, and the financial blow to all the retail businesses, restaurants, and service industry businesses in the area.

Finally, I respectfully request that I be allowed to speak to the commission at the scheduled meeting/hearing to clarify my view regarding the devastation to the local community that will result from the closing of Murray Center.

Sincerely,

CURL & ASSOCIATES, INC.



Louis R. Curl, P.E., P.L.S.
President

LRC\bc - LETR\GENRL\MURRAY CENTER 031412

February 28, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to the closing of the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

I've spent my entire professional career advocating for people with special needs. It started in the mid 1980s while as a college student I spent summers working as a camp counselor at the Easter Seal Handicamp in Colorado. Not long after that I became a special education teacher and earned a master's degree in special education. I've spent the last eight years as adjunct instructor in the Education Departments of both Kaskaskia College and Greenville College. More importantly, I come to you as someone with personal experience at the Murray Center. My children and I have volunteered at Murray Center since 2006 and have had nothing but positive experiences with the residents and staff.

As an educator I hold the belief that we should always start with the presumption of Least Restrictive Environment as we look at options for children or adults with special needs. When possible people with disabilities should live and work in the community with non-disabled peers. That being said, we must also consider where individuals with disabilities can be most successful and receive the care and services necessary for them to prosper physically and emotionally. Individuals with disabilities and their families must have a continuum of options. One size does not fit all.

Many of the individuals living at the Murray Center have considered and tried options including living with family or in community settings and have found those options do not provide for their complex needs as adults. Many residents are medically fragile, behaviorally unpredictable or cognitively unable to manage daily living skills without close supervision. The Murray Center provides a safe, loving and structured environment where residents receive twenty-four hour care. Even more important, not only does the Murray Center provide physical care, the dedicated staff also provides much needed routine, stability, learning opportunities, recreation, friendships and emotional care.

I do not believe that the closing of this facility will improve the quality of life for the individuals who currently live there. Rather I suspect just the opposite will be true. By closing Murray Center you will be uprooting residents from their home and the people who love and support them. There is no apparent plan, much less a trustworthy guarantee, that these residents will find appropriate living and working arrangements to replace the services they receive at Murray Center.

I have serious doubts that any politician that supports this closing can have one iota of care for the residents living at Murray Center. Surely a society is judged by how we care for those most vulnerable among us. Closing the Murray Center for financial reasons is a deplorable

act. If anyone believed that the residents at Murray Center were not being cared for appropriately that would be a different situation and I would be the first in line to close the facility. But that is most definitely not the case. This is not institutionalization as we may know it from the history books or even as it was when Murray Center was built in the 1960s. Murray Center has evolved as society understands better how to care for adults with developmental disabilities. I have full confidence that if left open, the staff of the Murray Center will continue to strive to provide the highest quality of life for those in their care.

It is my fervent hope that this commission will consider the welfare of the residents and withdraw the proposed plan to close Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia.

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa Krenz", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lisa Krenz
8702 Huey Road
Hoffman, IL 62250
618-335-5601
lkrenz@frontiernet.net

Jack R. Mann
#5 Orchard Drive
Centralia, IL 62801

February 27, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Commissioners:

My name is Jack Mann, and I have lived in Centralia over 40 years. I am retired as Business Administrator at Murray Center and in that position I supervised a large number of employees and prepared and monitored Murray Center budget.

In this capacity I both supervised all administrative services and participated in discussions and decisions affecting the entire institution. I was very impressed with the direct care staff and their dedication to providing the best possible care to the residents of Murray Center.

These residents, because of many major handicaps, are unable to function in the community or in a skilled institution without assistance with all their basic necessities of life. I believe that Murray Center should stay open because of the valuable service it renders to helpless individuals.

In past years, I have twice held the job as interim City Manager and finance director for the City of Centralia, and worked as a crew leader for the 2010 Census for part of Centralia. It was amazing, during this process, to see the number of houses that are unoccupied in Centralia. In one block there was only one house that was occupied. This was a block of reasonably priced homes and not a derelict part of the City. Marion county unemployment (of which the majority of Centralia resides) is 11.3%. It is well established that if the unemployment rate is high it is lower than the actual rate because workers drop out of the work force when unable to find employment.

Closing will have a negative effect on the City of Centralia and surrounding communities which are devastated with unemployment. This would affect the budget of all these governmental agencies, businesses, schools and churches. This is far too large an economic blow for this already depressed area to absorb.

I would like to request the opportunity to speak personally to your Commission. I could meet anytime at your discretion. Local officials are working hard to encourage new industries to help alleviate our unemployment rate. Failure is not an option for this community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack R. Mann".

Jack R. Mann

February 29, 2012
Keri A. Reid
11 Bel Air Dr.
Centralia, IL 62801

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Keri Reid and I am currently employed at the Murray Developmental Center which is facing closure. I am no longer in direct care of but still care for the individuals I previously served on a daily basis.

The people residing at Murray Center have more to lose than anyone in this decision. The individuals see many of the staff that cares for them as their family. Much of the staff feels the same about them in return. Many have no family left. Some have family that are unable, or even unwilling, to visit very often, if at all. Many also have family nearby that visits regularly, even daily. They won't be able to travel so far to see their children that regularly if they are forced out of their home. There are people that have not lived anywhere else since they were toddlers. It is the only home they have ever known. They will be ripped away from everything they hold dear and everyone who truly cares about them. Worse, they will not understand why. Teenagers that cannot remember to take the trash out at home will be likely care for the few that can be placed into smaller community homes. The majority will be moved into other SODCs because no one else is willing to take them.

Our community itself will suffer a devastating blow. We have already lost the "big" factories and our Post Office will soon depart along with another 41 jobs. Murray, Centralia Correctional Center, and St. Mary's Hospital are all that remain. Oh, and the fast food and retail which pay minimum wage. Small businesses will go under. The hospital will lose quite a bit of revenue as well. Many current employees will end up on Medicaid and Link along with any other government aid available. The jobs created by CILAs will not pay enough to live off of for most families. Our middle class will likely disappear.

On a personal level I will also lose. I'm a single mother to an amazing 2½-year-old boy. Thanks to the State of Illinois and Murray Center I have been able to support him financially 100% on my own. I try my best to provide him with fresh fruits, veggies, and healthy foods. Strawberries are his favorite. I guess I'll switch to less healthy options. I have **never** used government aid but I will be forced to. I will no longer be able to pay \$23/day for childcare. I will be forced to utilize Project Child. I will have to call the bank to come pick up my car because I can no longer pay for it. Thankfully my student loans are paid for since you can't declare bankruptcy on them. I hope someone will be willing to explain to my child why I can no longer provide for him myself. That it was through no fault of my own since my ability to do so was taken from me along with hundreds of others. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Keri Reid

Name: Keri Reid
Facility: Murray Dev. Center
Position: Opponent
Type of Test: Written Statement Filed



Allen & Geary Real Estate
117 N. Hickory
Centralia, Illinois 62801

117 N. HICKORY STREET
CENTRALIA, IL 62801
BUS. (618) 532-7300
FAX (618) 532-0714

March 3, 2012

**State of Illinois
Commission of Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706**

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing asking that you strongly consider rejecting Governor Pat Quinn's recommendation for the closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. First and foremost, is the concern for the safety, care, and well-being of the almost 300 residents that call Murray Center home. I can't imagine the fear and uncertainty that the families of these residents feel each day, worrying about what will happen to their loved ones should this facility closure occur.

Today, I am here to ask you to consider the economic impact that the loss of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center will have upon this area. I am enclosing a list of businesses and industries that have left the Marion County area within the past 10 years. Though there may be an inadvertent omission, the list is unbelievable when you see it in print.

As evidenced in national economic news, the housing industry is one of the first affected by job losses. Every day the news has a story related to the housing crisis. You can see by the information included that Marion County has long experienced more than its share of economic uncertainty. The threat of losing these jobs in our area with have a rippling effect upon the real estate industry, building supply entities, hardware stores, insurance agencies, banks, retail establishments, schools, churches...just about every area of our daily life. Since the housing market drives many aspects our our economy, you can easily determine just how devastating the closure to Murray Developmental Center will be to our area.

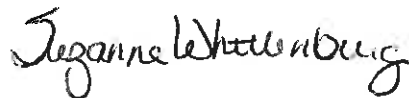
From information obtained from the Egyptian Board of Realtors MLS, presently we have an absorption rate of approximately 12 months, based on a 12 month sales calculation. Though the absorption rate is not an exact science, it does give an idea

of how long it will take for our existing inventory of 102 active listings in the 62801 zip code to sell. Imagine if we receive an influx of homes to this inventory with an already limited buyer pool.

I am also including a copy of the Illinois Association of Realtors Quarterly Housing Survey that will include both Marion and Clinton Counties. Please note that this disclaimer indicates this sales information is from participating Multiple Listing Services. Though prices seem to be down compared to previous reporting periods, the number of units sold in Marion County does show an increase. A local lender met with my office this past week and said forecasts show for mortgage interest rates to hover at their present number. With a glimpse of recovery on the horizon for our area, the loss of Murray Developmental Center will deeply injure this process.

Your commission is charged with making a very important decision that will greatly affect our area. Please weigh your decisions based on what will ultimately be for the greater good for our area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne Whittenburg".

Suzanne Whittenburg
Owner/Managing Broker
Coldwell Banker Allen & Geary

COMMERCIAL CLOSURES TO MARION COUNTY

**WORLD COLOR PRESS
LITTLEFUSE
CENTRALIA CONTAINER
JD CAHILL
MERIDIAN
CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILROAD
LAKELAND PAPER
TECH INDUSTRIES
BROWN SHOE
FLINT INK
SEALED AIR
NAPIC
ILLIOIS BEARING
WHEATON PLASTICS
MOORE BROTHERS
M&S PAINT DISTRIBUTING
REVOLUTION PLASTICS
FASTENAL
HENDERSON TRUCKING---MAIN OPERATIONS**

**AND ANNOUNCED LAST WEEK....UNITED STATES POST OFFICE MAIL
DISTRIBUTION CENTER, CENTRALIA**

Illinois Association of REALTORS Quarterly Housing Survey by County

All Sales Q4 2011

County	Q4 2009	Q4 2010	Q4 2011	Q4 2009-2010	Q4 2010-2011	Median Q4 2010	Median Q4 2011	% Change Median	Average Price Q4 2010	Average Price Q4 2011	% Average Price Change
ADAMS	170	137	158	-19.4 %	15.3 %	\$99,000	\$94,000	-5.1 %	\$126,536	\$118,649	-6.2 %
ALEXANDER	4	8	4	100.0 %	-50.0 %	\$43,250	\$82,500	90.8 %	\$42,675	\$95,875	124.7 %
BOND	28	16	22	-42.9 %	37.5 %	\$62,575	\$92,000	47.0 %	\$87,012	\$126,129	45.0 %
BOONE	190	122	166	-35.8 %	36.1 %	\$115,000	\$86,599	-24.7 %	\$136,770	\$116,517	-14.8 %
BROWN	5	4	5	-20.0 %	25.0 %	\$69,500	\$69,500	0.0 %	\$138,437	\$98,300	-29.0 %
BUREAU	71	67	63	-5.6 %	-6.0 %	\$83,000	\$72,075	-13.2 %	\$95,357	\$89,012	-6.7 %
CALHOUN	2	3	5	50.0 %	66.7 %	\$57,000	\$42,500	-25.4 %	\$67,133	\$72,180	7.5 %
CARROLL	39	40	37	2.6 %	-7.5 %	\$73,500	\$70,500	-4.1 %	\$109,562	\$160,771	46.7 %
CASS	5	7	7	40.0 %	0.0 %	\$37,500	\$39,500	5.3 %	\$60,242	\$66,191	9.9 %
CHAMPAIGN	432	315	318	-27.1 %	1.0 %	\$133,500	\$130,450	-2.3 %	\$148,717	\$150,455	1.2 %
CHRISTIAN	91	79	67	-13.2 %	-15.2 %	\$74,000	\$64,900	-12.3 %	\$83,118	\$81,611	-1.8 %
CLARK	31	24	25	-22.6 %	4.2 %	\$67,500	\$84,000	24.4 %	\$79,620	\$90,292	13.4 %
CLAY	15	8	12	-46.7 %	50.0 %	\$40,750	\$65,950	61.8 %	\$39,800	\$65,075	63.5 %
CLINTON	71	52	55	-26.8 %	5.8 %	\$110,750	\$125,000	12.9 %	\$197,171	\$119,394	-39.4 %
COLES	92	66	90	-28.3 %	36.4 %	\$68,000	\$90,200	32.6 %	\$82,559	\$109,347	32.4 %
COOK	11,541	8,198	9,535	-29.0 %	16.3 %	\$167,950	\$141,000	-16.0 %	\$256,649	\$213,043	-17.0 %
CRAWFORD	9	3	8	-66.7 %	166.7 %	\$30,000	\$69,000	130.0 %	\$36,666	\$64,097	74.8 %
CUMBERLAND	15	9	15	-40.0 %	66.7 %	\$71,500	\$110,000	53.8 %	\$84,166	\$125,000	48.5 %
DE KALB	204	127	190	-37.7 %	49.6 %	\$140,180	\$120,000	-14.4 %	\$149,461	\$126,114	-15.6 %
DEWITT	40	38	48	-5.0 %	26.3 %	\$79,950	\$76,600	-4.2 %	\$88,232	\$91,531	3.7 %
DOUGLAS	30	36	30	20.0 %	-16.7 %	\$64,375	\$89,750	39.4 %	\$83,365	\$100,161	20.1 %
DU PAGE	2,271	1,643	1,944	-27.7 %	18.3 %	\$213,210	\$182,000	-14.6 %	\$279,994	\$241,552	-13.7 %
EDGAR	24	25	33	4.2 %	32.0 %	\$57,500	\$70,000	21.7 %	\$79,228	\$72,037	-9.1 %
EFFINGHAM	84	72	73	-14.3 %	1.4 %	\$76,600	\$115,000	50.1 %	\$102,561	\$140,008	36.5 %
FAYETTE	30	25	20	-16.7 %	-20.0 %	\$50,000	\$91,500	83.0 %	\$67,732	\$100,665	48.6 %
FORD	48	43	30	-10.4 %	-30.2 %	\$82,000	\$66,000	-19.5 %	\$87,534	\$81,265	-7.2 %
FRANKLIN	67	53	72	-20.9 %	35.8 %	\$42,500	\$45,750	7.6 %	\$64,167	\$61,368	-4.4 %
FULTON	72	59	50	-18.1 %	-15.3 %	\$48,000	\$77,250	60.9 %	\$70,883	\$76,364	7.7 %
GALLATIN	1	4	0	300.0 %	-100.0 %	\$83,250	\$0	-100.0 %	\$72,125	\$0	-100.0 %
GREENE	16	10	8	-37.5 %	-20.0 %	\$53,900	\$61,500	14.1 %	\$71,085	\$64,520	-9.2 %
GRUNDY	122	97	112	-20.5 %	15.5 %	\$149,900	\$129,500	-13.6 %	\$161,196	\$144,390	-10.4 %
HAMILTON	3	1	1	-66.7 %	0.0 %	\$49,500	\$55,000	11.1 %	\$49,500	\$55,000	11.1 %
HANCOCK	7	5	8	-28.6 %	60.0 %	\$74,900	\$46,500	-37.9 %	\$90,980	\$56,612	-37.8 %
HARDIN	3	0	0	-100.0 %	0.0 %	\$0	\$0	0.0 %	\$0	\$0	0.0 %
HENDERSON	5	4	5	-20.0 %	25.0 %	\$70,000	\$39,000	-44.3 %	\$73,000	\$54,200	-25.8 %
HENRY	44	125	97	184.1 %	-22.4 %	\$75,000	\$88,500	18.0 %	\$93,518	\$102,487	9.6 %
IROQUOIS	50	38	52	-24.0 %	36.8 %	\$69,950	\$71,950	2.9 %	\$77,104	\$80,213	4.0 %
JACKSON	79	59	68	-25.3 %	15.3 %	\$90,000	\$112,500	25.0 %	\$105,915	\$126,906	19.8 %
JASPER	11	9	9	-18.2 %	0.0 %	\$80,000	\$62,000	-22.5 %	\$67,555	\$97,555	44.4 %
JEFFERSON	67	63	49	-6.0 %	-22.2 %	\$75,000	\$76,500	2.0 %	\$93,060	\$94,357	1.4 %
JERSEY	35	39	27	11.4 %	-30.8 %	\$98,500	\$91,500	-7.1 %	\$115,310	\$126,700	9.9 %
JO DAVIESS	73	65	42	-11.0 %	-35.4 %	\$137,500	\$161,250	17.3 %	\$150,568	\$183,508	21.9 %
JOHNSON	18	15	17	-16.7 %	13.3 %	\$49,900	\$39,000	-21.8 %	\$81,686	\$79,223	-3.0 %
KANE	1,230	1,002	1,237	-18.5 %	23.5 %	\$155,000	\$138,500	-10.6 %	\$189,563	\$168,187	-11.3 %
KANKAKEE	409	284	318	-30.6 %	12.0 %	\$105,900	\$115,000	8.6 %	\$113,647	\$124,268	9.3 %
KENDALL	410	290	396	-29.3 %	36.6 %	\$168,486	\$157,000	-6.8 %	\$181,122	\$168,548	-6.9 %

Information is based on a survey of multiple listing service (MLS) sales reported by participating Illinois REALTORS® local boards/associations. The Chicagoland PMSA, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, includes the counties of Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will. Data for the Chicagoland region is based in whole or in part on data supplied by Midwest Real Estate Data LLC as of the 7th of each month. Midwest Real Estate Data LLC does not guarantee nor is it in any way responsible for its accuracy. If no sales were reported in a specific county, that county is not included in this report. Source: Illinois Association of REALTORS®.

Illinois Association of REALTORS Quarterly Housing Survey by County

All Sales Q4 2011

County	Q4 2009	Q4 2010	Q4 2011	Q4 2009:2010	Q4 2010:2011	Median Q4 2010	Median Q4 2011	% Change Median	Average Price Q4 2010	Average Price Q4 2011	% Average Price Change
KNOX	124	103	97	-16.9%	-5.8%	\$69,900	\$75,000	7.3%	\$93,637	\$93,442	-0.2%
LA SALLE	295	196	200	-33.6%	2.0%	\$83,450	\$79,222	-5.1%	\$105,908	\$98,131	-7.3%
LAKE	1,628	1,326	1,616	-18.6%	21.9%	\$188,500	\$155,800	-17.3%	\$266,230	\$251,981	-5.4%
LEE	121	69	67	-43.0%	-2.9%	\$105,000	\$83,000	-21.0%	\$105,859	\$102,468	-3.2%
LIVINGSTON	55	54	55	-1.8%	1.9%	\$93,195	\$84,000	-9.9%	\$101,836	\$94,067	-7.6%
LOGAN	86	71	73	-17.4%	2.8%	\$65,900	\$83,000	25.9%	\$75,257	\$98,689	31.1%
MACON	230	199	222	-13.5%	11.6%	\$87,900	\$85,500	-2.7%	\$109,840	\$115,381	5.0%
MACOUPIN	94	82	85	-12.8%	3.7%	\$81,450	\$71,000	-12.8%	\$99,291	\$84,086	-15.3%
MADISON	744	527	567	-29.2%	7.6%	\$105,000	\$106,500	1.4%	\$126,981	\$122,185	-3.8%
MARION	96	68	70	-29.2%	2.9%	\$65,500	\$64,500	-1.5%	\$79,242	\$73,759	-6.9%
MARSHALL	14	8	6	-42.9%	-25.0%	\$84,500	\$80,450	-4.8%	\$97,106	\$107,425	10.6%
MASON	6	11	5	83.3%	-54.5%	\$33,000	\$45,500	37.9%	\$61,890	\$99,650	61.0%
MASSAC	28	16	19	-42.9%	18.8%	\$64,000	\$92,000	43.8%	\$78,037	\$100,700	29.0%
MCDONOUGH	40	32	36	-20.0%	12.5%	\$86,000	\$77,750	-9.6%	\$93,543	\$101,108	8.1%
MCHENRY	809	577	758	-28.7%	31.4%	\$173,500	\$145,250	-16.3%	\$196,981	\$172,098	-12.6%
MCLEAN	514	376	430	-26.8%	14.4%	\$165,750	\$149,250	-10.0%	\$191,210	\$173,486	-9.3%
MENARD	31	34	36	9.7%	5.9%	\$100,000	\$139,300	39.3%	\$105,444	\$148,136	40.5%
MERCER	8	38	27	375.0%	-28.9%	\$64,600	\$77,000	19.2%	\$89,155	\$72,988	-18.1%
MONROE	76	70	76	-7.9%	8.6%	\$161,568	\$165,000	2.1%	\$161,078	\$169,591	5.3%
MONTGOMERY	61	41	50	-32.8%	22.0%	\$57,000	\$62,250	9.2%	\$65,095	\$82,405	26.6%
MORGAN	83	68	61	-18.1%	-10.3%	\$77,450	\$80,000	3.3%	\$99,532	\$101,679	2.2%
MOULTRIE	25	16	18	-36.0%	12.5%	\$82,750	\$62,850	-24.0%	\$93,243	\$65,016	-30.3%
OGLE	121	135	138	11.6%	2.2%	\$92,000	\$110,000	19.6%	\$117,009	\$115,565	-1.2%
PEORIA	582	438	449	-24.7%	2.5%	\$120,000	\$111,500	-7.1%	\$154,080	\$140,223	-9.0%
PERRY	27	35	19	29.6%	-45.7%	\$68,000	\$64,900	-4.6%	\$78,380	\$59,710	-23.8%
PIATT	39	28	29	-28.2%	3.6%	\$125,850	\$105,000	-16.6%	\$146,251	\$124,131	-15.1%
PIKE	3	2	6	-33.3%	200.0%	\$156,550	\$18,000	-88.5%	\$156,550	\$28,083	-82.1%
POPE	0	2	2	0.0%	0.0%	\$73,500	\$223,950	204.7%	\$73,500	\$223,950	204.7%
PULASKI	3	2	4	-33.3%	100.0%	\$39,500	\$115,000	191.1%	\$39,500	\$111,225	181.6%
PUTNAM	13	9	16	-30.8%	77.8%	\$90,000	\$75,250	-16.4%	\$112,381	\$97,553	-13.2%
RANDOLPH	41	27	30	-34.1%	11.1%	\$72,000	\$86,500	20.1%	\$84,988	\$92,275	8.6%
ROCK ISLAND	356	272	284	-23.6%	4.4%	\$90,000	\$90,000	0.0%	\$109,959	\$107,047	-2.6%
SAINT CLAIR	670	471	456	-29.7%	-3.2%	\$128,000	\$114,500	-10.5%	\$132,109	\$130,549	-1.2%
SALINE	24	28	43	16.7%	53.6%	\$50,750	\$67,000	32.0%	\$55,290	\$76,467	38.3%
SANGAMON	659	484	502	-26.6%	3.7%	\$120,000	\$116,050	-3.3%	\$136,050	\$138,125	1.5%
SCHUYLER	2	1	0	-50.0%	-100.0%	\$18,000	\$0	-100.0%	\$18,000	\$0	-100.0%
SCOTT	6	4	2	-33.3%	-50.0%	\$61,625	\$215,000	248.9%	\$63,937	\$215,000	236.3%
SHELBY	40	34	31	-15.0%	-8.8%	\$77,500	\$80,000	3.2%	\$102,873	\$87,108	-15.3%
STARK	15	13	12	-13.3%	-7.7%	\$48,000	\$59,000	22.9%	\$55,846	\$58,191	4.2%
STEPHENSON	116	89	66	-23.3%	-25.8%	\$87,900	\$69,000	-21.5%	\$105,976	\$81,348	-23.2%
TAZEWELL	427	331	337	-22.5%	1.8%	\$125,100	\$115,500	-7.7%	\$147,385	\$133,928	-9.1%
UNION	34	17	18	-50.0%	5.9%	\$97,500	\$84,887	-12.9%	\$107,869	\$105,596	-2.1%
VERMILION	123	113	108	-8.1%	-4.4%	\$42,000	\$55,750	32.7%	\$60,439	\$67,542	11.8%
WARREN	14	22	11	57.1%	-50.0%	\$57,500	\$56,500	-1.7%	\$73,215	\$53,727	-26.6%
WASHINGTON	28	13	17	-53.6%	30.8%	\$141,500	\$60,000	-57.6%	\$127,787	\$83,664	-34.5%
WAYNE	3	6	3	100.0%	-50.0%	\$50,985	\$55,000	7.9%	\$56,395	\$44,666	-20.8%

Information is based on a survey of multiple listing service (MLS) sales reported by participating Illinois REALTORS® local boards/associations. The Chicagoland PMSA, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, includes the counties of Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will. Data for the Chicagoland region is based in whole or in part on data supplied by Midwest Real Estate Data LLC as of the 7th of each month. Midwest Real Estate Data LLC does not guarantee nor is it in any way responsible for its accuracy. If no sales were reported in a specific county, that county is not included in this report. Source: Illinois Association of REALTORS®.

March 5, 2012

Dear Council Members,

I am writing you in regard to the proposed closure of Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia, IL. I am urging you to please consider the impact on the lives of the people who live there. There many that have such extreme medical needs that constant care is needed that cannot be taken care of in group homes. Many of the residents have behavioral problems and cannot safely function in a regular society setting. I fear that many will end up in the criminal court system which is not what they deserve.

I would urge you to consider if this was your family member that was in danger of losing the only home that they have known for many years, and what a confusing life change this would be for them. This would tear their life apart.

When you consider closing Murray Center please choose to give these helpless people the gift of living in their home.

Thank you,

Connie Ward

Connie Ward

*RR1 Box 195B
Centralia, IL
62899*

To the Committee overseeing facility closures:

We are writing to protest the possible closing of the Warren G. Murray Developmental facility in Centralia, IL, as well as the Animal Diagnostic Lab also in Centralia.

If the committee could only come to tour Murray Center and see what tremendous work is being done there, their evaluations and opinions would be better understood. I have sympathy for the employees who would lose their jobs, but primarily am concerned about the residents. Many are totally unable to be housed in the community and need medical assistance and trained caregivers. Murray Center and the employees there are their "family", who give them love and much needed structure in their lives. They would not have been placed there by their biological parents if there had been other favorable options. I fail to see how closing the Center is fiscally responsible. Murray Center is profitable. When the residents are moved, is not the state also responsible for paying the other locations? Murray Center receives federal funding. Would the state of Illinois still receive that money if the institution is dismantled?


Also the Marion County Diagnostic Lab serves very wide agricultural vicinity and it makes no sense for the local farmers to have to take diseased animals to Galesburg for testing.

Please consider all these points before making such drastic decisions that affect so many in our already depressed area. We are counting on your wise judgment for fairness.

Respectfully,



Ellis E. McMillan



Marilyn McMillan

Dear Members of the COGFA panel,

The people who live at Murray Center appreciate calling Murray Center their home, along with family, friends, staff, and the community, who support one another. The consistency, structure, safety, and loving care provided at Murray Center continues to be seen.

Please reconsider closure!!

Thanks for your attention

God Bless!!

rod wehking

(618) 532-5895

325 Woods Ln

Centralia, IL 62801

To whom it may concern:

For over 40 years Warren G. Murray Developmental Center has been the home to individuals with developmental disabilities. Governor Pat Quinn has recently proposed in his budget for FY2013 that this center is shut down.

We need your help in stopping the forced unemployment of 550 people in an area with an already unreasonable unemployment rate of .11%. What kind of problems does the closure of this facility truly solve? How much money is it going to take to support the displaced workers? Whose responsibility is it going to be to pay the welfare checks of the freshly fired? Not to mention the new facilities who are going to end up with the residents of this facility OUT OF STATE! Thank you, governor, for insisting that these Illinois citizen be sent to another state. How did you plan on making money for your budget by sending away your OWN taxpaying, economy boosting, VOTING populace? Murray Center is where over approximately 275 residents call home. How would you feel if one day a stranger came in and shoved you out of your home and locked the door behind you with a "good luck" pat on the back? With no true transition proposal this is the only way one can assume you plan to "transition".

This may be a political game to you but you are messing with people's lives with complete disregard to their repercussions. If you were truly concerned about the people of your state you would have declined the raises for yourself and your political partners over the past year. This would have shown true concern and compassion for those of us at Murray Center who have gone for a year without our cost of living raises and still being thrown under the bus so you can retain and acquire more of your luxuries. You are proposing that Murray Center be shut down so that you can secure you and friends a yearly raise that I am sure you did not exclude from your budget.

I and thousands of other will not let the closure of this facility happen easily. We are prepared to fight with whatever it takes to keep these individuals safe. We will do whatever it takes to protect our families.

Only a true coward would target facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities and a center that offers services for people with mental illness because often times the individuals in which facilities like ours house do not have a voice. Do you not think they have a right to be heard? I implore you to ask them yourselves. Walk into the center and see for yourself what kind of devastation you would be responsible for. Ask them yourself where they want to live when you slam the doors of their home shut and lock them out for good. The voice of the residents here are strong and bold. How cowardly to target a small town in Southern Illinois with far less resources to bounce back from a devastating blow like the closure of Murray Center. Out of sight, out of mind right? As soon as you see to it that we are closed, it's the last you'll ever have to think of the facility, the employees or the individuals who call the center a home.

Instead of spreading more devastation to Illinois why not try to build it back up and focus on the potential we have here. Warren G. Murray Developmental Center currently houses 275 individuals but has the room to be home to 400. This center currently employs 550 citizens in an already struggling community, but has the potential to employ over 600. Why not focus on how to make this place better and how it can better serve Illinois as a whole instead of destroying it completely?

I sincerely thank you for your time,



Sara M. Spencer

03/04/2012

3/5/12

To: The Commission on Gov. Forecasting & Accountability

This letter is about the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. For nearly thirty years, I have had the opportunity to work with many of the residents at Murray through a school program provided by the Kaskaskia Special Education District. For over twenty years, I was at Murray Center in the on-ground school.

I saw the daily interaction between the staff and residents. The staff does a tremendous job. They work hard and put in long hours (mandated).

Many of the residents do not speak. Only people who work with them daily & on-going will understand their needs. Someone in a new facility being paid minimum wage won't care. Our daily paper constantly has want-ad's for employment at our few group homes. The staff doesn't stay. The work can be hard & the hours long.

Who will pay the price for the continued turn-over? The residents. I truly hope & pray that the governor's intent isn't the demise of residents as they are moved to new residences. Dead residents will sure save the state money!

I don't understand picking on people who can not stand up for themselves. I know many residents who have lived at Murray Center all their lives. If they could speak, they would save, "Leave me alone. This is my home."

Many of the residents have parents/grandparents who visit daily & weekly. If

Commission on Government
Forecasting & Accountability, Attn: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Bldg.
Springfield, IL 62706

I have never before written to the Voice of the People but the thought of the possible closing of Murray Center has really pulled at my heart strings. Closing Murray Center will be felt very strongly & deeply by the residents there, their families & the entire population of the city of Centralia & surrounding area. Until you have seen the residents in each of the cottages, you cannot in good conscience make a judgment concerning their welfare. These residents are really lovely human beings that have families that love them.

If you have healthy, normal children and grandchildren, the Lord has really blessed you. My family of 13 children happens to be blessed with 3 mentally challenged siblings one of which has been a resident of Murray for almost 10 years. My brother David is somewhat verbal & is speaking more since coming to the Center. He is very happy there & loves to tease his caregivers. He tells me over & over "everybody likes me" & says he likes his food. I find the employees very helpful & dedicated to the care & comfort of the residents.

I recently spoke to one of the administrators & told him I would take him into my home before letting him be moved to another State facility where he had been abused before. He said I wouldn't be able to provide for his special needs.

If you have never visited the Murray Center & observed the residents in every cottage then you should do so---then reconsider the decision to close it & realize how devastating it would be to their way of life by taking them from their dedicated care givers.

My prayer is that God will direct our State officials in this matter & leave these very special people where they are, happy & comfortable. I believe in our Great Nation & trust that reason will prevail in this closing decision.

Submitted by Lola (Burge) McCrory,
Freda Burge

3-6-2012
Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Sirs:

I'm writing to you in regard to the
proposed closing of Monay Center in Centralia,
Illinois.

The Center should not be closed.
It is home for 275 retarded residents.
And it employs about 550 people. The
City of Centralia would be decimated by
the loss of 550 jobs. And the parents
of the 275 residents would be left with
no place for their children or adults.

They have a safe, caring place now.

Enclosed is an editorial from
the Centralia Sentinel which speaks to
the issue.

Thank you.

Yours truly,
Roy Frank

'Please, don't close my home'

BY DAVE AND DORIS
FLORCZYK

CONCERNED PARENTS OF A
MURRAY CENTER RESIDENT

Hi, My name is Donny Florczyk. I am asking everyone to help me so that I am able to stay in my home at Murray Center. I am 28 years old and I cannot walk or talk. I cannot feed myself or clean myself. I depend on others to take care of everything for me. To think of having to leave my home is like a nightmare for me. How will I know that the people who are supposed to care for me won't end up hurting me? Who would know if they did? Please help me so that I can stay in the home with a family I love and know that I can lay my head down at night and feel safe, secure and love."



Donny Florczyk

These are words our son might use to persuade Governor Quinn from closing Murray Center if only he could speak for himself.

Join us together with our son in the fight for his very life and the many lives who call Murray Center their home. It's hard to even imagine that the governor could have the heart to force people such as these out of their home. What about their rights and their free-

GUEST COMMENTARY

doms? Should they not have a choice of where they want to live like the rest of us? The government should never have that kind of power to dictate where our loved ones live and where they feel is the safest and best place for their needs. They did not choose this life of being imprisoned inside a crippled body that they can never escape from. It is up to us to let their voices be heard and to make sure that their rights are never compromised. We are asking you to write to the governor and all legislators. You can also call them. Also, secondary to the people who directly depend on the services provided at Murray Center is our very own communities. We need to keep the few jobs that we have left. Printed below is a letter I have written to the governor. Thank you very much.

Governor Quinn:

I am writing to express my concerns on the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

My son Donny is 28 years old and has lived at Murray Center for the last 14 years. He has many struggles and diagnosis that range from Cerebral Palsy to being legally blind. Have you ever stopped to think and ask yourself why? Why does God cre-

ate some of us with able bodies that work properly and others who face many challenges, both physically and mentally. I have asked myself that question and I have asked God that question and this is the answer I hear back. "I have given you this treasure. What are you going to do to help him. How far will you go to give him the very best that this place can offer?"

During your budget briefing, your Chief of Staff, Jack Lavin, reports, and I quote, "Closing Murray Center will result in increased quality of life for those individuals." My question to you is how do you make a decision about someone's quality of life looking at the outside walls of Murray Center from your office in Springfield? We invite you, Governor Quinn, to step out of your office and walk into the world and INSIDE the walls of Murray Center so you can see for yourself the faces and the lives of whom you're dealing with. Don't send members of your staff. Just simply bring yourself. Don't stop at the Administration Building. Walk cottage to cottage and see for yourself this very special and very needy population whose disabilities range from severe behavioral challenges, to the very medically fragile and with serious and life threatening diseases, to the deaf and blind, to the brokenness that lie in those beds and sit in those wheelchairs. Arm yourself with the truth before you decide that a population such as these could possibly find a greater quality of life out in the community.

The people who live at Murray Center have a purpose in life.

God does not make mistakes. They are perfectly and wonderfully made in His sight and by His hands, and He is speaking to us, and to the State of Illinois. "I have given you this treasure. How far will you go to protect them and give them the very best life this place can offer?"

What about you Governor Quinn? How do you answer that question? Will you abandon them for the sake of money or politics?

If there were a better place don't you think that we as their parents and guardians would not have already examined all the options and possibilities? Murray Center is not just a building. It is a family, a community, a home for our sons and daughters, brothers and sisters. Many of them would not have survived this long without the exceptional care they receive from Murray Center, and to make them leave their home will undoubtedly be devastating to their health and well being and bring about a change that many of them may not recover from.

One last thought, I ask you to put yourself in their places, and in ours. What if someone made a decision that involved you and your loved one. A decision that takes you out of your home and away from your family and you were completely helpless to stop it. What if life handed you or your loved one a profound disability or a horrible accident? What if YOU needed the services that Murray Center offers in the future? We need to keep Murray Center open and thriving for us now and for our future citizens. Thank you very much.

March 3, 20

Commission on Government Forecasting + accounts
ATTN: Facility Closure

My name is Anna and I am 12 years old. I have been volunteering at the Murray Center for more than 6 years. When I heard that you might close down the Murray Center I was shocked and appalled. When my mom, my brother, and I first started volunteering there we read stories to some of the residents and were just there to be friends with them. Then I started to be pen pals with this one lady. We have been writing and visiting her for about 4 years now. We have become great friends. We go swimming in the Summer together and sometimes just go to talk together. She has no family here. She loves living at the Murray Center and all the friends she has made are here. To take all that away would be horrible for her.

You shouldn't treat the residents at the Murray Center like 2nd class citizens. They are people too. How would you like it if someone came up to you and said that you were leaving, you wouldn't

get to see your friends and you won't know anybody there? That's what you would be doing to them. The Murray Center is their life basically. It is not just a place where they eat and sleep but rather a loving and caring place that they can learn and have volunteers come and see them specifically. I know that you think that there are plenty other facilities and group homes that they can go to. There isn't really that many. and some of them can't live in places like that. So that is what the Murray Center is here for.

You can't take the Murray Center away. It's not only helping the residents but also the community. The community has made the Murray Center such a great place for them and it also helps people individually who volunteer.

You should see the joy in their faces when we come and see them. they care about us and we care about them. If you take away the Murray Center all of that will be gone.

You are taking all their friends and people they care about away from them. You can't do that. Just because they don't learn like most people or act differently. They are still people who care and are

loving to everyone they meet.

Please don't take away the Murray Center!! the community and the residents need it!

Sincerely,
Anna Krenz

March 7, 2012

To Our Up-State Elected Officials:

We of Southern Illinois, particularly of Centralia, are pleading your help and influence in preventing the closure of Murray Center as well as our Animal Disease Lab.

While the loss of 500+ jobs to an already economically-depressed town would be devastating, that ISN'T the most important impact. These 275 helpless, developmentally and disabled residents entrusted to Centralia's care CANNOT be thrust into group homes or back to their parents. Parents have already wrestled with the heart-breaking decision that they couldn't care for their child/children alone at home - that's why their child lives at Murray Center. Also, many residents are fed by stomach tubes; many require one-on-one 24-hour care, unable to perform even the simple every-day functions alone. They may be age 40 but locked in the mind and abilities of a 3-month old. Some are strong and violent, and I'm told the slightest change (be it caregiver, schedule, or re-location) really upsets and confuses them. Does this sound like people who should be uprooted from a place they know as "home" or who could survive in a sparsely-supervised group home? Moreover, our State Representative, John Cavaletto, says, "It's the only facility in the state of Illinois that DOESN'T lose money. It actually MAKES money because of the federal funds coming into it." Obviously, our Governor hasn't chosen to find out the FACTS.

While not employing nearly so many persons, services by the Animal Disease Lab are indispensable to so many needs in THIS AREA, not way north in Galesburg. Is a farmer likely to haul his dead cow, hog, horse, sheep, or pet up to Galesburg to detect a transmittable disease, contagious to other animals? Where will local water testing be done, food safety tests, screening tests of waste-water for farmers to prevent pollution, milk toxin tests or rabies or mosquito-borne diseases tests, etc?

Moreover, interstate and international commerce requires thousands of regulated tests as much more American beef and pork is being consumed around the world with much exported to China and elsewhere. The Lab does 98,000 such tests per year or more. It is not sensible nor safe to cut back on inspection services. Other facts little known are also that our Centralia Lab is in the Food Emergency Response Network in which USDA and FDA monitor America's food supply, as the seafood during the Gulf oil spill. They also are part of National Animal Health Lab Network, helping overloaded USDA labs. If more workload is put on Galesburg, who will cover these needs?

Again our State Representative points out that the Galesburg lab PAYS \$31,000 in rents, while our Centralia facility is ALREADY PAID FOR AND OWNED BY THE STATE. How does the Governor

(continued)

or anyone doing reasonable thinking deem this closure profitable?

In view of these FACTS, I, a life-long citizen of this area implore you to help our Governor know these truths. Please advise and vote NO to these closures.

Respectfully and Prayerfully,

Eppie N. Sharp
Eppie N. Sharp
1916 E. McCord, Apt. 215
Centralia, Il. 62801

3-6-12

Please do not consider closing the Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia, IL. We cannot afford to lose anymore jobs in our community. This shutdown would affect so many families. Illinois families can not afford to live now on the budget they have. How are they suppose to live and survive now? Please reconsider this thought and keep the Center open.

Sincerely,

Simsha McCawen

This is in support of keeping Murray Center in Centralia, It open. First on my list of concerns is the health and well being of the residents. This is a very vulnerable population that will suffer from being moved.

Second on my list is the staff & families and the negative impact this closing will have. The consequence of loss of jobs has historically been very costly for this area.

I would like to see this closing investigated this very thoroughly before a decision is made. Please have meetings in the immediate area so attendance is a true opportunity for the community to attend.

Jayce Butts

Please do not take any more jobs
away from our community! We have
already lost too much! This will be
devistating to the residents and employees.
Save Murray Center- Please!

Jaime Richardson

3/7/12

I am Writing to ask you to
please save Murray Center. Those
residents are loved and well Cared
for! The building and grounds
are wonderful!! The staff are well
trained and devoted. It makes
\$10-12 Million a year in federal
monies! Please don't do this!
Our area has already lost all our
factories as it is. There are No
jobs. Our children have to move
away to make a living. You'll
not only be breaking up families

but further destroying our already
crippling economy! Please Vote NO
to Close Murray. Make cuts elsewhere
in some "fluff" jobs! Not where
lives are at stake!! There is
enough waste in gov't already!
Make Cuts elsewhere. You could
move many more residents into
Murray from other places that
are closing. There is lots of
room to be utilized. You could
fill it to capacity and put
people to work!!! Please Save
Murray Center!

Thank You
Vicci Bowerman

TO whom it may concern,
Please do not close murray Center.
This facility is a vital part to our
community. It would be devastating
to the people who live there, and
to our small community for employment.
Please consider other measures to reduce our
state budget.

Sincerely,
Charity Austin

To Whom it may concern.

I am very worried about the devastating effect closing Warren & Murray Center. This area is already struggling financially. Please reconsider!

Becky Corder

3/5/12

Please do not allow the closure
of Murray Center! It would be
devastating to the residents and the
community as well. The area has
already lost many factories and people
have no jobs around here! Please
do not allow this to happen to us !!!

Rich Bowman

3/5/12

Dear Sirs:

Please, Please, Please do not allow the closure of Murray Center!!! It is the only home these people know. They are loved and well cared for. They are "family" with the staff as well. Our Community can not withstand any more closures in our area either! People are hurting and desperate in our area, losing their homes, unable to pay bills either. We've already lost all our factories, we are going to be a ghost town area if we lose anymore! Please help us! Vote No to Closure.

Vici Bowerman

3/5/12

Please don't Close Murray Center
It would be devastating for the
residents as well as the staff and
Community.

Betty R. Foster

Please do not allow the
closure of Murray Center. It
would be devastating to the residents
and the staff. Murray Center is their
home.

Thank
Ron Bowerman
3/5/12

3/06/2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Name: Valjean Lueking
Facility Being Closed: Murray Center - Centralia, IL
My Position: Oppose closing Murray Center

Through this letter I am giving you my written statement to strongly oppose the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. Speaking of the population residing at Murray Center, it would be a tragedy to displace people who have called Murray Center their home most of their lives. The residents of Murray Center have emotional, developmental, and physical needs which can best be attended by a trained staff of technicians, health care professionals, and social workers. This type of care would be impossible to find at private facilities, where staff numbers are much smaller. Health care professionals such as doctors and dentists are not available at all times like those provided at Murray Center. In fact, private facilities may find it very difficult to locate medical professionals who are prepared or willing to provide services to these people with special needs.

The families of the residents should also be taken into account. Many of the resident's family members live in the area and are able to visit and spend time with their loved ones living at Murray Center. Since there are not sufficient nursing homes or private facilities in the area, who knows where the displaced residents will be required to move? If the displaced resident would relocate many miles away, how much more difficult would it be for families to visit on a regular basis, or possibly even to visit? What a shame to disrupt people's lives. The needs of the residents are now being provided by a wonderful staff at Murray Center which will be impossible to replace.

I have lived my entire 56 years in this area, approximately within 7 miles of the facility. My wife has worked at Murray Center for 28 years. Finding an adequate job in our area will be impossible. The closing of Murray will affect our life greatly; I have been laid off since January 1, 2012, and hopefully will return to work shortly, as my work is somewhat seasonal. We have a daughter at nearby Kaskaskia College who will be transferring to Greenville College in the fall. I wonder if legislators have any idea how difficult it will be for the youth to remain in an area where the unemployment rate is in excess of 9% for the four county areas, and in excess of 11% for Marion County proper.

It simply astounds me that elections are being fought on the premise of retention and creation of jobs, yet nearly 600 people will be put out of work if Murray Center closes. It is incredible to believe how many area businesses will suffer and how many will end up closing. Area churches will lose attendance; if families must move, those remaining will be unable to give as much as they previously gave. Strapped social services will be hit hard by the newly unemployed, not only by those using the services, but also by those people who will no longer be able to donate their time and dollars to those providing services.

Property values will plummet and higher taxes will be required to pay for necessary basic services such as fire and local law enforcement.

The question that begs to be asked is why Murray Center was chosen as one of the Governor's targets for closure. Murray Center receives a considerable amount of federal monies which go back to the state treasury. Why would the state close an institution that is paying its own way? It is difficult for me to believe that our Governor would choose to pick on a population who cannot speak for themselves; there is a certain cruel aspect to the proposed closure.

Murray Center has continuously been updated; the facility and the grounds are always well maintained and its architecture is sound and the appearance is pleasing when you drive by the facility. The roads and mechanical facilities are in very good condition, so physical plant upkeep is certainly not an issue. In fact, that in itself is not an issue as facilities and grounds are a whole different part of the state budget.

Once again, I state I am opposed to the closing of Murray Center, I would certainly hope that all those in a position of responsibility would see for themselves the need to keep Murray Center open. The lives of so many people; the residents, employees, family members, even area businesses, and churches depend on keeping Murray Center open.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valjean Lueking".

Valjean Lueking
116 S. Oak Street
Box 122
Hoffman, IL 62250-0122

Facility: Murray Developmental Center
Position: Oppose closure

To the CGFA Commission:

Murray Developmental Center is home to 275 individuals. And it is a home—not an institution, a dinosaur or a warehouse. It is where they sleep, eat, bathe, watch TV, write letters, play games, argue, love, cry, decorate their rooms, throw their clothes on the floor, laugh, dance, eat snacks, share secrets—you know—just like your home. They feel safe and loved there because they are safe and loved there. How can anyone with a conscience rip them from their home where some of them have lived 90% of their lives and force them to go somewhere else against their will and that of their families. As a taxpayer and a citizen of this state I am appalled that we would do this to a population that can't defend itself.

Any time I have seen Murray Center residents in town they are clean, well dressed, supervised and smiling. I have seen them at ballgames, at Walmart, restaurants, the movies, and the rec center. I hear they also go to the orchards, church, to dances, the St. Louis zoo, plays, the Balloon Fest, concerts—you know—all the places we go. I and the rest of Centralia consider them members of our community and as such I feel obligated to speak up for them. Centralians do not want to lose these fellow citizens and the staple of the community that Murray Center is.

Not only will these individuals lose their home and their parents lose their peace of mind, the city of Centralia can not afford to lose 550 good paying jobs. There are so many houses for sale already that adding more will devastate the real estate market that is already struggling to survive. Centralia has lost so many jobs since I moved here in the eighties that losing this income will destroy what is left of what was once a vibrant community humming with industry and activity. Centralia used to be the place to go. If Murray Center closes it will be the place to go away from. Those who can will and those who can't will go on unemployment, then public assistance.

Please listen to the people who know these individuals, their families and this community. Please support Murray Center so that these individuals can remain in their home—you know—like you want to remain in your home.

Karen Bolen
Centralia, IL

Dear Mr Schoenberg,

This letter is going to be short but I hope my words will be powerful and you will take the time to read them.

I work at Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois. I take pride and enjoy what I do. My co-workers and I care for 16 individuals who can't physically take care of themselves. We cloth them, shower them, feed them (some of the individuals I care for have feeding tubes and require skilled nurses to administer their nourishment) reposition them, are attune to how they feel (only one individual we care for can talk) and we laugh with them. We are their advocates and take our position seriously.

In February the Governor announced he will close our facility. All I can say to that is "Shame on Him". He should at least come to Centralia himself and see who we care for. They are all someones loved one. They are all apart of someones family just like his family or yours.

Of course I don't know this for a fact but I must believe the Governor does not know of anyone with extreme disabilities like the individuals we care for. He should at least come and meet us. He needs to put faces with his decision. It is like if he doesn't see it, it doesn't exist. Believe me it does exist. They need us!

When you come to our small town in Southern Illinois for the CGFA hearings You will be the Governor's eyes. You need to open them and tell him how much we are needed for our individuals. Thank You for Listening
Alborah A. Nuge

Dear Michael Tryon,

This letter is very important it will effect so many lives. I can only hope what I write will at least help you see how important it is to keep Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois open. In February the governor announced that he plans on closing our facility. How can someone make such a big decision without even visiting us. This will effect so many lives which I know your aware of.

My co-workers and I care for 16 individuals. They are our extended family as we are theirs. The individuals we care for depend on us for everything during their daily lives. They cannot clean themselves, dress themselves, feed themselves or reposition themselves. We laugh with them and smile like any other family. Their home may be different than yours or mine but then so are our individuals. They may have emotional, physical or behavior problems. We are here to make life a little better for them.

I can only hope when you come to our small southern Illinois town for the C & FA hearing you and the other members realize how much our individuals need us. You will be eyes for the governor please, open his eyes to the importance of the Murray Development Center.

Thank You for Your Time,
Reborah Kuzi

Dear Al Riley,

What a worry some time we live in. Our daily worries combine on everything. Then in February the Governor decides to add a little more worry to many more lives. At that time he announced the closure of Warren G Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois. This is where I work.

Does the Governor realize how many lives he will be putting in turmoil? No, I suppose he doesn't because he hasn't even come to see our facility. If he plans to disrupt so many lives he could at least put some faces with his decision.

My co-workers and I care for 16 individuals. We take pride in our work and care for our extended family. They are part of us. We understand their needs and wants even if they are unable to talk. Their comfort is very important to us. We are here for them!

The individuals we care for are someone's child, brother, sister, aunt or uncle. Yes, their home is different than yours and mine but they too are different than us. Unfortunately they have disabilities. It may be physical, emotional, behavior or a mixture. They do the best they can and we are there to assist them.

When the CGFA members come to our small southern Illinois town I hope they come with their eyes and hearts open. If you do this I'm sure you'll see the love we have for our individuals and they for us.

Thank You,

Delorah Nye

2/2/12

To whom it may concern-

My name is Kelley Winegarner, I am a tech at Murray Center and have been employed there for almost 10 years. I am writing to ask that you help in our fight to keep Murray open. The residents we take care of are very special people. Some with behavior issues, which the staff do very good with. We can calm them down and many times switch the behavior into a positive. The medically involved rely on the 24 hour care of nurses and techs. To take that away is truly unfair! We have come to be their family, their friends, and their voices. Murray center is a great facility and a great and loving home, isn't that what everyone wants and deserves?

Thank You -
Kelley Winegarner

SAVE THEIR HOME!

Commission on Government Forecasting & Accountability
Attn: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

March 02, 2012

Commissioners:

I am writing to you in response to your decision to close Murray Center and the impact it will leave on the "kids".

My name is Tom Tate. I started working at Murray Center on July 9, 1979, and that is the day my life with the "kids" began. When I started working at Murray Center it was called the Warren G. Murray Children's Center. The residents were affectionately called the "kids", and for a lot of us it has stuck.

I am currently working with the most medically involved as a direct care Registered Nurse. However, I have served as a Residential Manager on two separate occasions on behaviorally challenged cottages. I went through the experience of monitoring Lincoln Developmental Center while it was being closed and I was directly involved in the transfer of several of their residents to Murray. Also I was the nurse for 17 years at our local county jail and have seen the effects of poor community placement can have in that aspect. I may not be considered an "expert" in the field due to the lack of initials behind my name, but I do feel my years of experience have provided me with knowledge and insight others may not possess.

I have unfairly simplified my observations but it would take much too long to try to cover everything. I'll begin with the higher functioning behaviorally challenged. There is a reason most of these "kids" are still at Murray. There has been a BIG push to downsize, place people in community settings since I started almost 33 years ago. However, you can only PUSH so far. This is where our facility comes in. Several of our latest admissions have come from other facilities such as a community based setting or even county jails due to their inability to cope in the community setting. I have literally taken care of individuals at Murray Center and later at the county jail. They have been used, abused and victimized by others. I can think of one girl who was put in Murray to recuperate from surgery and rescue her from an abusive home environment. She did well and was placed back into the community. I took care of her sometime later in jail. She was there for shoplifting. She had done what she was told and stole some cigarettes. She was living with an older man who was obviously using her and most likely abusing her, but he hadn't done anything legally wrong. These "Kids" clearly do not belong incarcerated due to their mental capacity. They struggle to function outside of a very structured environment. They may be a danger to themselves by ingesting foreign objects, hitting and biting themselves or banging their heads until seriously hurting themselves due to their inability to understand and control their emotions. They may also be a danger to others by becoming physically aggressive by biting, hitting, kicking or throwing things. We at Murray have the ability to help maintain and control those behaviors. Certain individuals are able to be dealt with before they escalate just because we know what to say or do to avert the problem. This comes from KNOWING our people. It often doesn't take much deviation from their daily routine to cause such unwanted behaviors. Often times it has taken years of programming, treatment

and training to achieve where they are functioning at today. Disrupting that continuity may cause them to regress to the point of losing all that has been achieved and then some. A lot of our individuals have family that live close and they go for home visits frequently. But stay too long or something throws their routine off and they want and NEED to go back to Murray. Many times they calm down just knowing they are headed back to Murray. They know enough to know they are going HOME!!!!

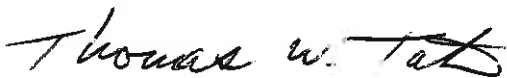
Now for my Sweet Spot. The most fragile medically involved. These are the "Kids" I have spent the most time with. Many of these people will transition well. However, just as many if not more will not. I assure you there will be "collateral damage". We see it all the time when one of our "Kids" end up in the nursing home for various reasons. We have seen it in the past with previous facility closures. There was a funeral recently for one of our guys who had been in the nursing home for only a couple of months. The "damage" may not be as dramatic as a death. It may be as simple as an increase in respiratory infections or GI disorders due to improper positioning while feeding etc. due to the new staff not knowing the intimate details of caring for them. These things invariably lead to more serious conditions with time. We have individuals that show signs of stress just moving with-in Murray Center, but the people that know them best are literally right next door and readily available to help ease the transition. With Murray Center and all the employees gone that safety net is gone. The general public would call these people the offensive old term "vegetable." Vegetable or not, the lowest functioning person I have EVER cared for still had a personality, they cried, they smiled, they showed pain. They do show us signs that they are glad to be home after they have been hospitalized etc. As low functioning as they are, they still realize when they are in that familiar place with familiar people. THEY ARE HOME!!!

Who is it that decides what is considered HOME for these people? Most of these individuals have lived their whole life at Murray and believe me it is their HOME. They seem happy to me. Do we move normal people out of their homes because someone somewhere doesn't think it is the proper way to live? The people here do things regularly that my own Kids seldom if ever did. Things like going to the zoo, high school and college sporting events and of course trips to see the St. Louis Cardinals at least once a year. That's just for starters. The "Kids" that live here are VERY active. We are not a warehouse for imperfect people. WE ARE A HOME FOR VERY SPECIAL PEOPLE!!!

We as citizens of this great state should not be treating the weak and vulnerable as PAWNS. I strongly feel there is still a need for our type of facility. The community based facilities are not available in the quality or quantity needed for our type of "Kids".

We at Murray Center are VERY GOOD at what we do. I would encourage you to visit us and meet all the people this closure will affect and see for yourself.

On Behalf of the "Kids"



Thomas W. Tate RN

4156 Hoots Chapel Rd.

Salem, IL 62881

Dear COFGA members

I am sending this letter in great concern for the residents at Murray Center in Centralia.

Murray Center has been the home to many of Illinois' most fragile people for many years. These individuals know and love the people who give them the total care they depend on. To be moved from their home and family would cause severe mental and physical strain bringing about behaviors and possible death for many of these individuals. Closing Murray Center is not in the best interest of people who are in need.

Also, the direct loss of 550 jobs and countless indirect jobs would be devastating to the economy.

Please make the right decision and keep Murray Center open.

These helpless people are counting on you to save their home.

Thank you

Brenda Bowcliff

2216 E McCord

Cent. Ill. 62801

Dear Senator:

Governor Quinn is planning the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. This facility serves the most fragile, developmentally disabled citizens of our state. These residents require round the clock care for their very basic needs. Many need to be fed, bathed, and dressed, and need constant supervision. The center is also home to many residents with very severe emotional and psychological needs. Due to the professional care they receive from the staff at Murray Center they have been able to thrive and become part of not just the Murray Center community, but our local communities. They are involved in activities in the community and have become our friends and neighbors.

The center is home to almost 300 residents and provides jobs to over 500 people. The loss of Murray Center will not only cause the loss of these 500 jobs, but more importantly will take away these residents' home. For many of these residents Murray Center has been their home for over 30 years. Do not take away their home, and the livelihood of over 500 people.

We demand that when you vote you vote to keep Murray Center open and adequately funded so these very vulnerable citizens of Illinois can continue to be productive, happy, and safe. It is your responsibility and job to make the right, moral decision for these residents.

Remember.....what if this were your child? Everyone of these residents is someone's loved one. Don't take away their home!!!!!!

KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN AND FUNDED!

REMEMBER.....IT IS SOMEONE'S HOME!!!!!!

Robert Williams
1663 Community Beach Rd.
Oliver Ill. 62470

C O F G A

Dear Senator:

Governor Quinn is planning the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. This facility serves the most fragile, developmentally disabled citizens of our state. These residents require round the clock care for their very basic needs. Many need to be fed, bathed, and dressed, and need constant supervision. The center is also home to many residents with very severe emotional and psychological needs. Due to the professional care they receive from the staff at Murray Center they have been able to thrive and become part of not just the Murray Center community, but our local communities. They are involved in activities in the community and have become our friends and neighbors.

The center is home to almost 300 residents and provides jobs to over 500 people. The loss of Murray Center will not only cause the loss of these 500 jobs, but more importantly will take away these residents' home. For many of these residents Murray Center has been their home for over 30 years. Do not take away their home, and the livelihood of over 500 people.

We demand that when you vote you vote to keep Murray Center open and adequately funded so these very vulnerable citizens of Illinois can continue to be productive, happy, and safe. It is your responsibility and job to make the right, moral decision for these residents.

Remember.....what if this were your child? Everyone of these residents is someone's loved one. Don't take away their home!!!!!!

KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN AND FUNDED!

REMEMBER.....IT IS SOMEONE'S HOME!!!!!!

Robert Williams
1663 Community Beach Rd.
Idol, Ill. 62870

COTGA
Dear Senator:

Governor Quinn is planning the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. This facility serves the most fragile, developmentally disabled citizens of our state. These residents require round the clock care for their very basic needs. Many need to be fed, bathed, and dressed, and need constant supervision. The center is also home to many residents with very severe emotional and psychological needs. Due to the professional care they receive from the staff at Murray Center they have been able to thrive and become part of not just the Murray Center community, but our local communities. They are involved in activities in the community and have become our friends and neighbors.

The center is home to almost 300 residents and provides jobs to over 500 people. The loss of Murray Center will not only cause the loss of these 500 jobs, but more importantly will take away these residents' home. For many of these residents Murray Center has been their home for over 30 years. Do not take away their home, and the livelihood of over 500 people.

We demand that when you vote you vote to keep Murray Center open and adequately funded so these very vulnerable citizens of Illinois can continue to be productive, happy, and safe. It is your responsibility and job to make the right, moral decision for these residents.

Remember.....what if this were your child? Everyone of these residents is someone's loved one. Don't take away their home!!!!!!

KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN AND FUNDED!

REMEMBER.....IT IS SOMEONE'S HOME!!!!

*Curt Sykes
3 Crestwood Dr
Centralia, IL 62801*

COFGA

IT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST FOR THE RESIDENTS OF MURRAY CENTER TO STAY IN THEIR HOME AND CONTINUE TO GET THE CARE THEY ARE USED TO FROM THE PEOPLE THEY KNOW AND TRUST. IT IS THE ONLY HOME MANY OF THEM KNOW. THEY ARE HAPPY AND WELL CARED FOR. TO TAKE THEIR HOME AWAY FROM THEM JUST ISN'T THE RIGHT CHOICE TO MAKE. PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THEIR HOME, HEALTH AND HAPPINESS ~~AND MIND~~. SAVE THEIR HOME AND KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN. MANY PEOPLE'S HOME IS IN YOUR HANDS. HELP THEM KEEP IT.

THANK YOU

HERMAN ROWCLIFF

1532 S APLAR

CENT. IL. 62801

COPGA
Dear-Senator:

Governor Quinn is planning the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. This facility serves the most fragile, developmentally disabled citizens of our state. These residents require round the clock care for their very basic needs. Many need to be fed, bathed, and dressed, and need constant supervision. The center is also home to many residents with very severe emotional and psychological needs. Due to the professional care they receive from the staff at Murray Center they have been able to thrive and become part of not just the Murray Center community, but our local communities. They are involved in activities in the community and have become our friends and neighbors.

The center is home to almost 300 residents and provides jobs to over 500 people. The loss of Murray Center will not only cause the loss of these 500 jobs, but more importantly will take away these residents' home. For many of these residents Murray Center has been their home for over 30 years. Do not take away their home, and the livelihood of over 500 people.

We demand that when you vote you vote to keep Murray Center open and adequately funded so these very vulnerable citizens of Illinois can continue to be productive, happy, and safe. It is your responsibility and job to make the right, moral decision for these residents.

Remember.....what if this were your child? Everyone of these residents is someone's loved one. Don't take away their home!!!!!!

KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN AND FUNDED!

REMEMBER.....IT IS SOMEONE'S HOME!!!!

*Monica Giffith
3 Crestwood Dr.
Centralia IL 62501*



BISHOP GEOFFREY V. DUDLEY, SR., D. MIN.
Senior Pastor

Dear Legislator:

Governor Quinn is planning the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. This facility serves the most fragile, developmentally disabled citizens of our state. These residents require around the clock care for their very basic needs. Many need to be fed, bathed, and dressed, and need constant supervision. The center is also home to many residents with very severe emotional and psychological needs. Due to the professional care they receive from the staff at Murray Center they have been able to thrive and become part of not just the Murray Center community, but our local communities. They are involved in activities in the community and have become our friends and neighbors.

The center is home to almost 300 residents and provides jobs to over 500 people. The loss of these 500 jobs, but more importantly will take away these residents' home. For many of these residents Murray Center has been their home for over 30 years. Do not take away their home, and livelihood of over 500 people.

We demand that when you vote, you vote to keep Murray Center open and adequately funded so these very vulnerable citizens of Illinois can continue to be productive, happy, and safe. It is your responsibility and job to make the right, moral decision for these residents.

Remember...what if this was your child? Every one of these residents is someone's loved one. Don't take away their home!!!

KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN AND FUNDED!

REMEMBER.....IT IS SOMEONE'S HOME!!!!!!!

Bishop Geoffrey V. Dudley, Sr. D. Min
Senior Pastor

3/14/2012

Dear Governor Pat Quinn,

I would like to share with you the benefits our students have received from the Murray Center in Centralia, IL. This state operated development center that serves 275 individuals has provided opportunities for the students in our occupational therapy program to have valuable fieldwork experiences. The occupational therapists at this facility have provided structured, supervised experiences to mentor our students as they apply their academic knowledge to a real world setting.

The occupational therapy services and programs at the Murray Center serve individuals ages 19 through 70 plus. These individuals are enabled to live in a supportive environment. Occupational therapy provides numerous services including: assistance in safe wheelchair positioning; upper extremity splinting and range of motion to address contractures and prevent further skin breakdown; sensory stimulation programs to enhance cognition and facilitation of sensory processing to support calm, functional behaviors; creation and implementation of adaptive feeding equipment and feeding positioning and swallowing for adequate nutritional intake and independence with eating. These services are valuable to the residents of Murray Center and are excellent learning experiences for our students. Students will also miss possible job opportunities this area.

I hope you will consider the services and educational opportunities the Murray Center provides as you contemplate the proposed closure of the Murray Center.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Katrina Serwe, MS, OTR, ATP, CLT
Concordia University Wisconsin
Assistant Professor
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, HS 137
Occupational Therapy Department
12800 North Lake Shore Drive
Mequon, WI 53097-2402
262.243.4238
fax 262.243.2938
Katrina.serwe@cuw.edu



Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market

3213 S. Park Ave.
Herrin, IL 62948
618-942-6902
Fax 618-942-6658

March 16, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is being written in support of Murray Center located in Centralia, Illinois. As the director of the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market Occupational Therapy Assistant Program I am concerned about the potential loss of a valuable clinical site. Murray Center provides quality clinical experiences with individuals who have developmental disabilities. In our rural area, this type of clinical experience is difficult to attain but critical to the overall knowledge and preparation of quality occupational therapy assistants.

Approximately twenty occupational therapy assistants graduate each year from the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market program. The closing of Murray Center would eliminate potential job opportunities for our graduates. Several of our students are considered "non-traditional" students and need to establish employment in close proximity to their families and homes.

Please take this letter into consideration when reviewing the decision to close Murray Center. The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market supports the center staying open.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Langley, MS. Ed., COTA/L
Director

Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market



27210 College Road
Centralia, IL 62801
618-545-3000 www.kaskaskia.edu

Kaskaskia College
Dr. Jim Underwood, President
Board of Trustees
Mr. Jim Beasley Mr. Kelly Bennett
Dr. Dee Boswell Mr. Bryan Cain
Mr. John W. Hawley Mr. Jack Mays
Ms. Linda Stover
Ms. Chelsea Miller, Student Trustee

March 15, 2012

Mr. Jamie Veach, Director
Murray Developmental Center
1535 W. McCord Street
Centralia, IL 62801

Dear Jamie:

Kaskaskia College has had a long, successful, and productive history of partnering with the Murray Developmental Center for providing programs and services. This has been a wonderful reciprocal relationship with the Center's clients and staff attending functions at the College and assisting with the educational needs of the College, while the College's faculty and staff are serving needs at the Center. A few of these major areas of mutual arrangements are:

1. The Murray Center serves as a clinical site for our RN and PN Nursing programs. KC students in these programs are receiving valuable training in a clinical setting at the Center. Because of the close proximity of the Center to our main campus, the Center serves as an excellent instructional site for many of our Nursing students. Conversely, the Center's clients receive the benefits of the controlled nursing services from our students and faculty. I'm proud to add that our student evaluations reflect very high marks for their experiences at the Murray Center. Not having these clinical experiences available at the Murray Center for our Nursing students would be detrimental to our Nursing programs. Given the major shortage of nurses in rural and south central Illinois, as well as throughout the state and nation, we need all available clinical sites that are accessible for preparing nurses for meeting this major demand.
2. Through the KC Reading Link program we make available tutorial services to the Center's clients for literacy and GED preparation assistance. We provide these services through a large number of volunteer tutors and College staff, serving our entire College district. We are committed to improving the literacy rates in our region and we are pleased to make available locally these services for the Murray Center, when needed. Not only are formal tutorial processes available, but also volunteers are available to spend time just reading

Mr. Jamie Veach, Director

March 15, 2012

Page 2

to clients in an informal manner, which is a very valuable process. People enjoy and are proud to have the opportunity to serve the clients at the Center.

3. Our scholarship student-athletes and coaches serve the Center in so many ways. The Murray center games are a wonderful example of KC coaches and student-athletes serving the Center. Other projects our athletic department has assisted the Center with include: serving concessions at Center events, planting flowers in the many flower gardens as a part of the Center's beautification program, reading program, and welcoming and assisting Center clients and staff at College events, to name just a few. It should be noted that our faculty, staff, and students benefit greatly from their participation at the Center. Their rewards for hard work are in the smiles and satisfaction of accomplishments of the Center's staff and clients. In 2010, the College was recognized by the Illinois Human Services Division with the Human Service Award for the volunteer hours and projects we were involved in partnership with the Murray Developmental Center during Fiscal Year 2009-10. This was a state-wide award for volunteerism in a partnership with the Murray Developmental Center. We are extremely proud of this wonderful honor that is a reflection of the importance of the services under this partnership.
4. All of our scholarship students are involved in service-learning, and as such volunteer in many different ways to serve organizations throughout our College district. The Center is one of the entities students serve, as needed. We have found over the years that once students have experienced volunteerism, they are hooked. They learn the importance of citizenship and putting others ahead of self, and the experiences at the Murray Center are great examples of our students expanding their understanding of the importance of service. The Center is helping our students directly in learning a core value of caring for others. Having the Center available for the learning experiences of our students is critical to a comprehensive education.

The Murray Developmental Center is a valued partner of Kaskaskia College. There are many more activities and events in which our faculty, staff, and students participate with the Center, but suffice it to say that we are proud to be serving the Center and hope that we will be able to for many years in the future. I want to also mention the staff members at the Center are

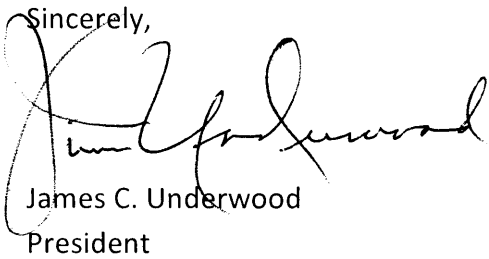
Mr. Jamie Veach

March 15, 2012

Page 3

superb to work with. I am very impressed with their commitment to the clients and to the Center. They have a passion for what they do in providing the highest possible quality of life of the residents and clients. We stand by to continue to serve the people at the Murray Developmental Center in all ways that we possibly can be of service. Thank you and the staff members at the Center for all that you do in serving others.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James C. Underwood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "U".

James C. Underwood
President

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Kaskaskia College Board of Trustees as follows:

WHEREAS, the Murray Center has a long history of providing quality service to the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the Murray Center is all about caring for others and this facility has been an effective operation for several years and a wonderful home to many clients over the years; and

WHEREAS, the Murray Center has long provided employment opportunities for residents of the region; and

WHEREAS, many central and southern Illinois areas are already burdened by the loss of large numbers of desperately needed jobs, resulting in difficult times for many area families; and

WHEREAS, the region having unemployment rates exceeding both state and federal levels is already recognized as distressed; and

WHEREAS, the closure of this facility will result in devastating and long lasting effects on the current residents of Murray Center; and

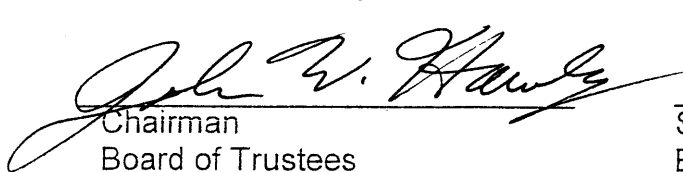
WHEREAS, the closure of this facility will result in devastating and long lasting effects on the economies of the region; and

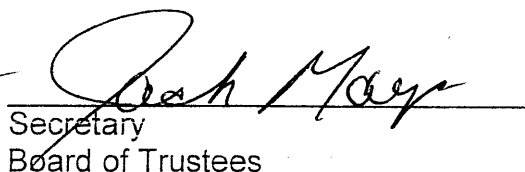
WHEREAS, the Murray Center has many volunteers serving the facility and programs at a cost savings to the State; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, has proposed the closing of the Murray Center.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, the Kaskaskia College Board of Trustees respectfully presents this Resolution to The Honorable Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, expressing that the closing of the Murray Center is not in the best interest of the citizens of Illinois, and therefore, request reconsideration of the proposed closing of said facility.

Dated this 15th day of March, 2012


Chairman
Board of Trustees


Secretary
Board of Trustees

To Whom It May Concern,

Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL should not close. Murray Center is a home for the entire population who reside here. It is comfort for them to know that they have a place to call home with caring people to provide support for them. Many of the employees who work here have been here for several years. A large group of residents have lived here since they were in their early childhood. This is the only place they know as home. I am sure you would not want to be forced out of your home because the state thought they could save some money. The residents that reside here are vulnerable in the general population. They did not ask to be this way. We need to provide the care that is necessary to keep them safe.

I am a social work intern from SIUE doing my practicum for my BSW this year. I have seen the caring and compassion that is strived to care for the residents. The staff goes above and beyond the call of duty to provide the best quality of life for the residents. The buildings are well kept and a safe environment. The residents are never bored. Activities are provided everyday to keep them engaged in the community. I have worked at a 16 bed ICF/DD facility for 5 years. The care that was done at the group home does not compare to the care here at Murray Center. I have seen how hard it is for the staff to get Murray Center residents into group homes. Many times the group homes are unable to accommodate to the needs of the residents. If currently the community homes are unable to take some individuals, then what is going to happen when Murray Center closes and they have to take them? The quality of care for the residents is going to go down. If the residents were able to live in community homes they would be in there and not at Murray Center.

On site at Murray Center they have a wide array of services for the residents. The services include but not limited to dental, X-ray, pharmacy, dietary, barber, and day training. If these residents were to be placed in the community these services would not be readily available to them. On top of the services, there are caring doctors who are available at anytime to help with the medical needs of the residents. What community living home would be able to provide this type of care at any time of day? The state will have to pay more for the medical care of the individuals since they would not be taken care of as well as they would have at Murray Center. Preventative care is important to the state of Illinois. I believe that Murray Center does just that. When an issue arises they take action and deal with the problem before any major medical interventions need to be taken.

What am I to say to the residents who have came up to me asking, "Why are they closing Murray Center?" or "Where am I going to live?" This is a question that they need answered. I hope the answer is, "You are going to stay right here at Murray Center, YOUR home."

So please reconsider the closure of Murray Center. This is a home just like yours and mine. We would not want to be kicked out so they do not deserve this either. The state needs to figure out alternatives to save money then close a perfectly productive home.

Sincerely,

Megan Humphrey

Social Work Intern, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Dear CGFA:

A letter has come to our home saying that Murray Center in Centralia is going to close. I know that most states have closed their facilities similar to Murray. I understand that this sort of facility is not necessarily seen as a proper undertaking for the states, as opposed to non-profit or for-profit agencies. This all sounds good on paper and is politically popular.

The problem is that Murray is an exceptionally good facility for a certain population of developmentally handicapped individuals--ones in need of more intensive and extensive care than the average.

Our daughter resided in three ICFDDs prior to Murray. Each one had the same problem: her disabilities were so challenging that the facility could not genuinely meet her needs, each facility resorted to added medication in an attempt to help her adapt, and she did not respond well to the medications. She had a near-fatal reaction to medication at the third ICFDD and was hospitalized for weeks.

At that time it was recommended that we consider Murray. Because of prior informational meetings given by the school district our daughter attended, we had a very negative view of state operated facilities and did not want to consider such a placement. We finally agreed to a meeting with the staff from Murray, some professionals from her previous facility, and medical personnel who were very familiar with her.

We were astonished at the understanding of her problems and the wisdom in how to handle her. The Murray staff demonstrated in that meeting. For the first time in her life we had professionals who could cheerfully face the challenges her care would entail without denial of the seriousness of her problems or threats that if she did not improve she would have to leave yet another facility--AND THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IN MANY AREAS IMPROVEMENT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE OR EXTREMELY SLOW AND DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE but that Murray would accept her for who and what she is and help her be her best. This has been the best environment our daughter could be in--accepting but encouraging.

I do not want to see such a professional and caring and SUCCESSFUL facility closed when the most challenged and challenging of Illinois's residents need the care it provides.

Do not balance the budget of Illinois on the backs of its most vulnerable citizens. Murray is not just another facility, whose residents can easily be accepted into other facilities and thrive. Murray has many "hard cases" who need to be there for months, to get rehab so they can go to group homes or ICFDDs, or who need to be there for decades, even a lifetime, because their needs are so challenging that they do not "fit" in facilities with less round-the-clock staffing, fewer professionals in house, or budgetary concerns which limit the staff-to-client ratio.

It has been an enormous relief to our daughter to be in a housing situation where her genuine, challenging, critical needs can be met without uproar or recrimination. Her medication load was reduced, her seizure activity decreased extremely dramatically, and she could enjoy life again. I wish we could care for her at home--but that is not possible. I would love it if she could adjust to a local group home or ICFDD, but the chances are worse than slim. Murray is her home and does a better job than her father and I could, or than any other facility we have ever heard of or seen, short of extremely high-end private facilities (which the state is welcome to pay for after they discover she cannot be cared for via group homes or ICFDDs).

Sandra Kubbs 2805 Carrelton Dr, Champaign Il 61821 akubbs@comcast.net 217-356-3696

To Members of CoGFA:

I am writing to oppose the closure of Murray Center.

I have worked at Murray Center for ¹²16 years. Prior to coming to Murray, I worked at the local sheltered workshop, where residents of Murray were provided with day training services. In my experience, I have been responsible for individuals with multiple physical limitations, as well as individuals who have serious and extreme behavior problems.

I am here to testify that each and every one of the people who live at Murray Center call this their home. To them, it is not an 'institution'. It is a safe place to live where their needs are met. No one is warehoused. These residents of Centralia have friends and jobs, and family, and relationships. They are kept clean, their clothes are clean and in good repair. Their medical and psychiatric needs are being met. They are active members of their community – in Centralia, IL.

Every day since Governor Quinn made his budget announcement, I see the effects his careless words are causing to the people who reside at 1535 W. McCord. The way the Governor is handling this situation amounts to extreme mental cruelty to these people, and I consider it abuse. If he worked here, his job would be in jeopardy, and he would be subjected to an investigation.

As the leader of our state government, I would have expected Governor Quinn to be supporting and representing citizens who cannot stand up for themselves. But he's not. He appears to be quite heartless and ruthless. He and his special interest groups are eager to needlessly and shamelessly evict 275 people from their home. He should be ashamed of himself.

Steve Koppen

Steve Koppen

825 West 13th

Centralia IL 62801

MHT-5

SBMKoppen@Att.net

Judi Willis (judi_willis@cox.net)

5309 E. Halifax Street

Mesa, AZ 85205

Opposed to Closing

Murray Center

Written statement filed

April 4, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure (Murray Center)

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commission Members:

I am strongly opposed to closing Murray Center, where my half-sister, Roberta Ann Parsons (DOB 3/1/1946), has resided since January 25, 1971. Prior to that she was a resident of Lincoln Hospital for about 25 years. On the court document that appointed me a co-guardian (along with our mother who now is 86 years old with Alzheimer's) of Roberta in 1985, it describes Roberta's condition as "Encephalopathy due to birth trauma. Cerebral Palsy. Spastic quadriplegic, severe, with contractures. Level of retardation, profound." In talking with the social workers at Murray Center over the years, they continue to indicate that Roberta has a physical and developmental age of between two and four months. She is confined to a specially-made wheelchair and has a feeding tube.

As you can imagine, an individual with those conditions requires intense intervention, which has always been delivered in a caring environment provided by the staff who are full of compassion and concern for those in their charge. I cannot help but wonder what might happen to Roberta if she were moved to a group home and did not have medical staff available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Hers has not been an easy life, but she is entitled to live it surrounded by people with whom she is comfortable and who have proven they are competent to handle not only day-to-day care, but medical emergencies that arise from time to time.

I know that the Commission must look at dollars and cents. I ask that you also look at a possible closure of Murray Center in terms of what may happen to some of the state's most vulnerable people.

Thank you for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,
Judi Willis



**Murray Parents Association
Warren G Murray Developmental Center, Centralia, IL**

Murray Center Parents Association (MPA) in existence for over 40 years with over 350 members strong in 2012, opposes the closure of the Warren G Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

Murray Center is the home to our loved ones with staff considered a surrogate family. There are residents that have lived at Murray since it opened over 40 years ago. There was a need for the facility at that time, and the need continues. Murray is home to over 275 residents and to force them to leave their home and surrogate family is unconscionable. The Illinois Nurses Association also believes there is a risk of moving the disabled to lesser, inadequate levels of care.

Community Based Residence (CBR) will never be equipped to handle the medically fragile residents of the Murray Center. Sexually aggressive residents, physically aggressive residents, residents with severe behavior disorders, cannot be served properly in the community. Murray is currently the only regional SODC equipped to handle emergency placement and professional intervention of individuals that can no longer be managed in a CBR.

MPA opposes the State using comparison costs that do not take into account the specialized care required for individuals at Murray. The cost of CBR has never been correctly compared to that of a State Operated Developmental Center (SODC). MPA urges legislators to demand a breakdown of the figure the state quotes for the cost of care at a CBR. Only then can the costs be compared and debated.

MPA supports Senate Bill 3564. This bill calls for a panel to determine if closures or reduction in population or reduction in staff, by more than 20%, makes sense.

MPA agrees with the community leaders of Centralia Illinois. Murray is the 2nd largest employer in Centralia and the economic impact of the closure of Murray will devastate the community. The Murray residents are citizens of Centralia and are active in the community through shopping, dining and attending events. The community reciprocates by regularly volunteering their time.

MPA wants legislators to be aware of the important stipulation in the consent decree of the Ligas vs. Hamos lawsuit, which was settled in federal court. The Judge declared that this decree “does not require or force anyone to move out of an institution against his or her will...For those individuals who wish to continue living in an ICF/DD, the decree **REQUIRES** the state to honor that choice and to continue to provide adequate funding to meet the needs of such individuals.” MPA supports and agrees with the need to properly fund both SODC and CBR facilities.

MPA supports the Illinois Nurses Association’s statement that it is politically expedient, but morally wrong, to balance the budget woes of Illinois on the backs of the poor, the mentally ill, and the developmentally disabled.

TAZWOOD MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER QUESTIONS STATE'S FUNDING CUTS

Source: Peoria Journal Star

By: Sharon Woods Harris

Posted: 02/02/2012

A colorful "Happy birthday to you" sign hangs on the wall at 1423 Valle Vista, but there are no celebrants wishing the birthday boy well.

The home is so cold that one can almost see one's breath. A phone rings but no one answers. The shades are drawn and the home is now only a void where five people once lived — three for more than 15 years. Tazwood is working on plans to open the group home as apartment housing for less developmentally delayed individuals — a costly project for which funding has not yet been identified.

Those five developmentally disabled and mentally ill patients were forced from their home because of state funding cuts to Tazwood Mental Health Center. While the clients were able to stay in this area, the move was a hard one for them because of the nature of their illnesses.

The group home, also known as a Community Integrated Living Arrangement, is so far the only program Tazwood has cut due to declining state funding for mental health programs. And while many mental health care facilities across the state have had to make similar unsavory choices, providers are hearing a broken record from Springfield singing the same tired song of decades past.

In the 1980s, the state emptied several mental health institutions — including the George A. Zeller Zone Center in Peoria. The move was touted as a way to give mental health care patients more independence, but the reality was that it would save the state money because it costs far less to house a patient in a community group home than a big institution.

Now, Gov. Pat Quinn has announced the "Active Community Care Transition" plan, by which the state would transition mental health patients from institutions. The state will spend \$15 million on a Chicago-area program aimed at moving people with disabilities out of institutions and into homes of their own.

Home First Illinois will develop about 100 units of accessible affordable housing for 145 people over the next three years. Yet not a sound is heard in a once-vibrant CILA that the state could not properly fund to keep the doors open. Quinn says he would eventually like to see the program expanded statewide.

"We closed the CILA facility essentially for a lack of adequate funding," said Tazwood Mental Health Center CEO Caterina Richardson. "CILAs are specialized funding and we had only one in this building, so the rates that we received for the clients who were living here was not sufficient to sustain just a single CILA.

"For me, the biggest thing is people read these articles and they think, 'Oh, there's an answer.' You also read that the state is billions and billions of dollars behind in paying their debts. So people read stories of how for each person the state will save \$80,000 to \$100,000, but where will those funds be redistributed to and will they ensure the quality of care for the clients who are coming out of the institutions — those are my two biggest concerns with the announcements. The lack of coordination that our state has is amazing. I would be interested to know where that (\$15 million) came from if they are giving money to build new facilities."

The state currently owes Tazwood approximately \$800,000 for past services. Tazwood opened in 1996. State funding has declined by 48 percent since then. Tazwood is a not-for-profit organization that provides substance abuse treatment and outpatient mental health care.

Richardson said the idea is a good one, but the method in which it is done is important.

"It is not new, and we have been seeing this for years and years about closure of state facilities," she said. "Illinois is one of the states with the highest number of people still institutionalized, so from a theoretical perspective it's something we have needed to do for a long time — get people out of institutionalized care.

"What Illinois has not historically done well is transition people out of institutionalized care. I have not yet seen an initial transition plan or any official or authoritative movement on how they're going to transition folks out (of the institutions)."

Richardson said it is cheaper to house clients in community settings — eventually.

"(State officials) often quote numbers from \$120,000 to \$150,000 a year for one person in an institution and \$45,000 to \$60,000 for a person in community care," she said. "But what they don't do well in the documentation is show what it costs to get them there.

"When you initially take a person out of an institution who has been there 15, 20 to 25 years, you don't take them from being institutionalized in a very rigid schedule, very set interaction of who and what they do, straight into a community situation with very little support — even into a setting with 24-hour support. Those proposed savings for the state are long term with no plan to get there, so I'm sure it will be another one of our lovely disasters that we have in social services in Illinois."

Richardson said many of the patients who were removed from mental institutions in years past were placed inappropriately in nursing homes. The state is now under the Williams Consent Decree — a legal suit settlement that requires the state to take inappropriately placed mental patients out of nursing homes and place them into community care.

State funding to Tazwood and agencies across the state for programs have been cut across the board from 9 percent to more than 40 percent. The funding for psychiatric medications was cut by more than 40 percent. Medicaid clients, both residential and outpatient, are entitled to only 10 hours of mental health therapy. Group home clients do not get any mental health therapy because their developmental disability disqualifies them under Medicaid. Clients without a medical card can only receive five hours of care, which is barely enough time for an assessment and very little case management. Case management includes monitoring, connecting the client with other agencies for various assistance and other help.

Tazewell County Resource Center President and CEO Jamie Durdell said he sees the governor's plan as an opportunity. He said the plan to empty state hospitals will save the state \$20 million a year, and that the governor has said the money saved will be used for mental health care funding.

Durdell said Illinois is 48th out of 50 in the ranking of states for funding programs for people with disabilities, and third in the nation for the number of people in institutions. To date, said Durdell, 13 states and the District of Columbia have closed all state institutions. The plan could be a good one if operated properly, he said. TCRC operates six residential homes for people with mental disabilities.

"I think my concerns would be summed up by saying that the closure must be person-centered and (well planned)," said Durdell. "If people do not get the services they need it will be detrimental and harmful."

"If they give people six months to transition, absolutely (there will be problems). If they take 12 to 16 months, it will be much easier."

44th Facility Closure

March 30, 2012

Hi, my name is Christal Highland and I am writing this letter on behalf of my Cousin he lives at The Murray ~~Det~~ Development Center.

I am letting you know that I am opposed to the closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center.

My cousin has been living there for 20 yrs, and now they are talking about closing the only home he knows.

Please don't close his home he needs the Murray Center to stay open because of his needs that he requires.

I want this letter to be filed as a written testimony.

Sincerely

Christal Highland

4/1/12

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

To Whom It May Concern;

My name is Donna Perchez and I am opposed to the closing of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. I have been truly blessed to work at Murray Center for 33 years as an Educator/Q.S.P.

Many of the individuals with whom I work are the most vulnerable of all people. Not only are they developmentally disabled but also have multiple sensory disabilities such as visual and hearing impairments and have multiple medical conditions such as cardiac, pulmonary, gastrointestinal and neurological disorders.

Some may say that our individuals would best be served in a private facility, be it a CILA, Group Home, or Skilled Nursing Facility. Through the years I have seen many who would disagree. I work with one individual whose mother has told me many times about an incident in a Group Home where her son fell through a shower chair. I don't believe another individual's family feels a private facility was the best alternative when she came to Murray's Center nearly comatose from being over medicated. Another individual with whom I work lived in a private facility with a communication device that only said, "yes" and "no." In fact he can understand most anything said to him, think in the abstract and can spell. After coming to Murray Center he acquired a communication device that can help him to communicate thousands of words and phrases.

Those who say that an "institution" is no place for an individual to live, have not talked to the families of Gene, Derise, Sam, Jimmy, Lyndall, George, Robert or Donna. These individuals lived in an "institution," Murray Center, for many years. For one reason or another, they were determined to be more appropriately placed in a private owned facility. Many, in fact, survived outside of Murray Center for less than one year.

It is difficult for most people to make major life changes. Imagine making those changes while dealing with comprehension communication, and comfort issues. Imagine the added difficulties of major medical conditions. Imagine you too were living in an SODC that you considered home. This is a home to our individuals, a home many have known most of their lives.

In 2001, Lincoln Developmental Center, another SODC closed. Individuals came to Murray Center on buses and vans, in groups and as individuals. I worked with four of those individuals. Their Interdisciplinary Team and Direct Care Professionals worked hard to make them welcome and to meet their needs: physically and emotionally. Cheryl died within the first year. We lost JoAnn in 2006 and Gary died in 2007. Judith was the last to pass and she died in 2010. All of the people we received had passed within nine years.

I recently read a book about World War II. When I came to the part where they were "relocating" the developmentally disabled to another facility it was chilling. When I think of Murray Center closing, I get the same feeling. Our people are not being exterminated but their life expectancy will most certainly be impacted.

It is with these concerns in mind that I respectfully ask Governor Patrick Quinn and those on the COGFA Committee to reconsider the closure of Murray Center and keep their home open.

Sincerely,


Donna Perchez

Opposition to Proposed Closure of Murray Developmental Center

Murray Developmental Center is a residential community that is home to 275 special and unique individuals. They are cared for and supported by an equally special and unique set of individuals who function not only as their caregivers but also as their family, some of them the only family they know. The individuals who live at Murray Center are considered an enriching part of the community in which they participate in every activity available in this town and beyond. Some of them have lived here since they were children.

Murray Center has so much to offer. There are physicians 365 days a year who check on and attend to the residents' medical needs. Nursing services are available 24 hours a day, every day, nurses whose skills and expertise are the best to be found anywhere. On staff, available five days a week, are the services of a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, 3 clinical pharmacists, a speech-language pathologist, a dietician, activity therapists, a clinical psychologist, social workers, experienced Qualified Support Professionals, an x-ray technician, and a wheelchair carpenter who custom designs chairs to meet each individual's need. Also available on grounds are the services of a dentist, a neurologist, a psychiatrist, a podiatrist, a urologist, the Eye Clinic, gynecological services, lab services, EKG services, mammograms and x-ray services. We have a carpenter, plumber, a machinist and an electrician whose services are available 24 hours a day if needed. We have a foster grandparent program in which people from the community come to Murray Center to interact with the residents. We also have an inground swimming pool, a Bistro where the individuals serve food they have helped prepare, an entire cottage devoted to activities, a gymnasium and gardens which the individuals tend. We even own a house where families may visit with their loved ones in private. In the Spring, our individuals participate in a prom where they wear suits and prom dresses, have their hair and nails done and faces made up. They absolutely love it.

We have individuals who ride public transportation to utilize library services. They go to the polls to vote. They attend community events such as ballgames, plays, the Balloon Fest, the Halloween parade, local festivals of all kinds, dances and concerts. They patronize stores, restaurants, the movies and swim and play ball at the recreation center. They visit the orchards, attend church, visit the St. Louis Zoo and attend Cardinal games. They participate in a fashion show in conjunction with a local clothing store.

I am so concerned about the well being of the residents that I hesitate to mention what Murray's closure will do to the community financially. This town will dry up and die if it loses 550 good paying jobs. Morale around town has already been damaged. Sales of cars and houses have come to a standstill. Loans are already being denied to Murray Center employees. Every member of this and surrounding communities will feel the economic repercussions for years to come if Murray Center closes. Being from metropolitan areas perhaps you do not understand what our jobs mean to us. When a state employee in the city loses his job he just transfers to another agency. Here, there are no jobs to transfer to, state or otherwise. When we lose our livelihoods we go on unemployment and when it runs out, public aid. What this does to a family is heartbreaking. We know, because it happens regularly here. If possible we leave town. No income means no sales or income taxes for the state coffers. How will that help the budget? Few of our college educated children even consider coming home to live and raise a family.

Speaking of the budget, I'm sure you've already been made aware that the citizens of this State consider it shameful to attempt to balance it by depriving those who can not speak for themselves of their homes. They did not create this problem and should not have to suffer in an attempt to fix it. Please keep in mind that after Lincoln Developmental Center closed the budget only got worse and after Howe Developmental Center closed it only got much worse. Obviously, destroying the homes of the disabled is not the answer to our fiscal problems. With such dire financial problems as this State has can we afford to throw away the \$10 million Murray Center contributes to help pay the bills?

As for "everyone can live in the community" there are so many issues that are not being honestly discussed. Of all the issues, the one that troubles me the most is the lack of *choice*. Community placement for those who desire it and can achieve it is the goal of all the SODCs. We work hard at grooming our individuals toward that goal, finding the right fit, carefully transitioning them and continue to monitor and offer services after they've moved in order to maximize the possibility of their success. Nothing makes us feel more proud and successful than to see a resident and family choose to seek placement and choose when and where they will go. However, the question begs to be asked: What if our residents and their families choose to live at Murray Center? Who's to say they don't have the right to make that choice? Why do strangers get to make that choice for them? What if they don't like the choice these strangers make for them? Do we really believe a cookie cutter one-size-fits-all approach is better than a continuum of care that has something to meet the needs of everyone?

Please give this matter your most sincere consideration. You hold within your hands the opportunity to prevent a disaster--for the residents, their families, the employees and the community.

Thank you for your time and attention. We at Murray Center look forward to our hearing.

C. S. Fell

March 27, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN:Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Phyllis Bechtel and for the past ten years I have worked at Borowiaks IGA in Centralia; first as Produce Manager and currently Store Manager. And for these past ten years, I have seen numerous businesses close their doors never to return there by putting many hard working people out of work.

This is why I feel that the closing of the Warren G. Murray Center would be another devastating blow to this already depressed community. As the unemployment rate in Marion County approaches double digits in percentages and more and more businesses pull out of the area Centralia is at a crossroads for its very survival. The closure of Murray Center would almost certainly be a death knell for this community and have adverse effects on the surrounding communities; as many people commute to work there.

Not only is there concern for the many employees of the Warren G. Murray Center but one must also think of the almost 300 residents that currently reside there and their families as well. Murray Center provides a safe home for these residents and gives peace of mind to their family members as to the well being and safety of their loved ones.

Finally, the closure of Murray Center will have trickle down effect on local businesses. Closing this facility will most certainly impact real estate, banks, churches, schools and the local food service industry.

In closing, I urge you to reject Governor Pat Quinn's proposal to close the Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia. This area has already been devastated by the current economic crisis and the closure of this facility will have devastating consequences on this region. One that it may very well not recover from.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Bechtel
Store Manager
Borowiaks IGA
Centralia, IL

March 30, 2012

OPPOSE CLOSURE OF MURRAY DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

To: CoGFA Committee:

I am writing in regard to the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. Murray Center is home to human beings who should be afforded the same rights as all other citizens of this state. They should have the right to choose where they want to live and receive services. They should have the right to choose to stay in the home some of them have been in for 30-40 years, since they were children. They should have the right to the best care and treatment this state has to offer given consistently by caregivers they have known and trusted for years. They should have the right not to be yanked from their homes against their will on the recommendations of people who don't know them and told where they will spend the rest of their lives. They should have the right not to be used as political pawns or as a means of enriching private businesses who have figured out how to make a buck off their backs and how to get the ear of those who have the power to disrupt their lives. Their families should have the right to rest at night knowing their loved one is residing where they want them to, safe and secure. Ask the families what they want. If state-operated facilities are so bad and group homes so good why are the families fighting tooth and nail to keep their family member at Murray Center? Don't you think they know and want what's best for their loved one? How could it be that someone else can say they know more about what's best for them? How much uproar would there be if the government tried to forcibly remove any other group of people from their homes? The politico-speak from the governor's office is that this will "improve their quality of life." Really? Would you feel that way if someone was forcing you into something you didn't want to do and believed wasn't best for you?

Ask family members what they want and they will tell you they want their loved one to remain at Murray Center at least until *they* determine they are ready for the community. They don't want them forced into a group home and they sure don't want them shipped to Anna or Chicago to another state facility when it doesn't work out and there will be many instances in which it won't.

Murray Center is a wonderful facility that is home to these individuals. Residents receive the best of medical care, an education and/or a work program and community activities surrounded by their friends where they are able to reach their maximum potential in a safe and secure environment.

Please consider the wants the needs of the individual and their families. It is their lives that are being toyed with and in jeopardy of being devastated.

Sincerely,
A. Elizabeth Davis

April 2, 2012

Nancy Serafini
2225 Mallard Drive
Freeport, IL 61032

Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: CONCERNS - Potential Closing of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center

One of my earliest memories of growing up in Centralia was the construction of Murray Children's Center. I was a student of Trinity Lutheran School and rode the bus past the site on 161. The progress of that project was something we watched closely. Little did I know at that young age the impact it would have on Centralia and the surrounding area/s - not only the town, but the residents, families & employees. Turns out, it had far reaching impact for families in the state of Illinois.

Warren G. Murray Devel. Center has been the answer to many prayers for many years. It is its very own COMMUNITY with members. The members are the children(residents), many of whom have lived there most of their lives. They have come to know, trust and love their caregivers and teachers. The other members are the employees that this facility has been blessed with, (some for many, many years). They do a valuable service in teaching and loving these residents. A closing would have devastating effects on these "children" to be taken from the "home" that they have known. For many, a truly comfortable and secure day is being in the same routine - day in and day out. Those of us that have had healthy children and families fall very short of being able to understand this emotional impact on the residents and their families.

One of my lifelong friends has a son at Murrays. He has lived there for 25 years! It's his home. He cannot live in a "home setting". He has times where it is extremely hard to handle him and is unpredictable at best. Change for him is like change was for my mother who had Alzheimers - all symptoms worsened to the extreme if out of routine. We have a family that puts countless hours and dollars supporting and volunteering for Murrays.

Also, my daughter-in-law had a brother that lived at the facility for several years. They were from a community close to St. Louis. He was severely disabled and died several years ago. During the years that they came for visits, they were a part of the Centralia community and have fond memories of spending time at the parks. They are still involved with many activities that support the handicapped, such as Special Olympics, back in their own area of the state.

That points me to really consider the collective volunteer hours that most likely would never have been "paid forward" if not for the services provided to hundreds of families! There are far reaching benefits that are a direct result of the experiences influenced by Warren G. Murray Developmental Center.

I have been away from my home town for many years and Centralia has seen many downturns from what used to be a thriving community. To close WGM would only have an extremely negative outcome for the economy and community. There is no justification in closing this facility. I doubt that there is any plan of action to utilize this very specialized facility if vacated. It most likely would sit empty & deteriorate by the month while waiting for a decision of how to set it back into service.

All this being said, this is not about memories. It is about families that have need of a facility for their handicapped children, and children in need of a facility that can teach them to the best of their abilities. It's about employees trained to do what we as parents are not able to do for these children. It's not about saving money for the state, but should be about saving services for our disabled community members. I am very much against closing Warren G. Murray Developmental Center and I ask your consideration in maintaining the services provided and keeping it open.

Thank you for your valuable time and consideration in this matter.

Regards,

Nancy (Nelson) Serafini

My brother Darryl Mavers (age 52) presently lives at Murray Center. He had resided at Harrisburg, and then it was closed to turn it into a prison. Darryl was then sent to the supposed "less restrictive" environment of a community based home. At this place a 300 pound worker sat on him, held his mouth, after taking food away from Darryl. The worker did not want Darryl eating. Six of the other workers held him down and the 300 pound woman sat on him. By the time paramedics arrived he was blue!!!!!! **This abuse because Darryl wanted something to eat!** What else happened to Darryl at this home we do not know, as Darryl functions as a three (yes, 3) year old, with limited verbal skills.

Darryl was then moved to another community facility. They drugged him so much that when we came to visit him all he would do is sit and drool. The reason they said they drugged him was because they didn't like the fact that he walked around the facility. **They wanted him to stay in his room, so their solution to the problem was to drug him!!!**

Darryl then moved to another community based facility. **Here a worker hit Darryl in the mouth and knocked out Darryl's front tooth.** Finally, it was arranged that Darryl move to Murray Center.

Now we see a Darryl who has thrived at Murray Center. His behavioral problems have GREATLY diminished, and most of all Darryl is happy, not drugged, and free to be a part of the community of Murray Center and Centralia. When we come to visit he is smiling. When we used to bring Darryl back to the community homes after a visit, he was kicking, screaming, crying, and we had to physically drag him into the home....and Governor Quinn says this is a better, less restrictive environment for my brother! Please use common sense and your heart, and do not take away Darryl's home. I do not, will not believe there is a better, more loving home for Darryl than Murray Center. They have the professional staff, experience, and caring attitude that has allowed Darryl to live up to his highest potential. Thank you,

Brenda Hamilton 618-214-1032

*Please take the time
to read all these letters!
Thanks!*

Our son Mark, age 27, has lived at Murray Center for the past 16 years. He functions as a 9 month old, needing total care ...he wears a diaper, needs to be fed, clothed, and constant supervision so he doesn't put things into his mouth and choke. He can walk and this is what he loves to do. He is able to walk throughout the whole cottage, and I know he is safe, and happy. Throughout these past 16 years we have frequently been asked if we would like to move Mark into a community based facility. We have toured several of these homes, and our first question is always, "What hours can we visit?" Their answer is always, "Oh, you have to call first, don't just drop in." This to me is a red flag....if they are not worried about the worker's activities they would encourage visits anytime of the day or night. At Murray Center we have visited at 10 a.m., 10 p.m., 3 a.m., and not once have we been told not to come. This is Mark's home, and we are free to see him whenever we want.

I am a guardian for my 52 year old brother Mike who functions as a seven year old. He moved to a CILA five years ago, and this has been a real learning experience for all of us. Mike, and the six other residents are all able to talk, use the telephone, and go get help. There is always only one staff on duty, except occasionally on Sundays when the team leader is present. There have been six team leaders in the past five years.....one stole money from the residents, one duct taped the hot water valve so the residents could not use the hot water, as she said the clients were using too much water. Luckily I took a picture of it, and called the director of the agency, and he took care of getting the hot water turned back on. The average age of the staff is 30 years old. Substitute workers are usually between 18-21 with less than two weeks of training, and this is for 7 residents, several who have behavioral issues.

Speaking of behavior issues.....in the past three years the following incidents have occurred. The latest two within the past month.

We were outside at the CILA, and a client proceeded to take off all his clothes. The worker tried to stop him, but the resident ran away. Luckily we were there so we stayed with the other six clients while the staff member tried to get the client to come back. He was unsuccessful, and finally the police had to pick up the resident. This was very upsetting to the other residents, but could have had a much worse outcome if we had not been there to watch the other residents.

Another time a resident called 911 and accused one of the staff of assaulting him. The police came, pulled the worker outside, handcuffed him, and was throwing him into the police car. The whole time the worker is

trying to explain that he couldn't leave the other clients by themselves, and that the story was made up. Eventually a team leader arrived, and the police realized the story was totally bogus.

My brother was drugged on psychotropic drugs, and he frequently became violent. He is a big person.....6' 4" tall and 300 pounds. When he threw one of his violent fits, the entire home suffered. There were no backups so when he wouldn't cooperate the entire group home had to miss any outings they had planned. Eventually his drugs were regulated, but he still has moment when violence is evident.

The latest incident was just two weeks ago when a resident became angry at one of the staff, and shoved the worker down. The worker called 911, as they are told by management to do for any altercation. The police said they weren't coming because they were tired of the calls at the home. The resident shoved the worker down, sat on him, and was pounding the worker's head on the floor. Luckily the worker had his cell phone on and called 911 again. The police finally came and pulled the client off the worker. All this while my brother and the other 5 residents stood by and watched because there was no backup. We learned about the incident when my brother called.

We are working to improve my brother's home, but under no circumstances could our son Mark live in a community based facility. My brother and the other residents at his CILA can call us whenever things happen. Our son would not be able to do this, as he is unable to talk and we would not have any idea what happened to him. He would be totally defenseless from being raped, assaulted, or sodomized. He is a baby!!!! The staff at the community based facilities have minimal training, there is a high turnover, and very little oversight. The state promises many things.....and rarely are these things delivered. Do not use our son Mark as part of a grand "social experiment" to help solve the state's budget problem. There will be tragic consequences for this immoral decision.lives will be damaged and lost. Use your heart and common sense and keep Murray Center open. There is a reason my son lives there.....we have found NOTHING in the community that even closely meets his needs. Thank you,

Jitty and Rita Winkeler, Mark's parents, 618-210-9678

Our daughter Tammy had spinal meningitis when she was three days old. We kept her at home with us until she was 26 years old, when we were unable to care for her due to her increasing medical and behavioral problems. She has had several community home placements and these have all failed miserably with Tammy continually being rejected by the homes, as they could not care for her. She was placed in a home in Fairfield with 10-12 other residents. She lasted in this home for only 1 (yes ONE) hour as they said they could not handle her behavior. Staff at this home also confided in me that during the evening shifts they frequently had parties and socialized with their friends instead of watching the clients. She was then placed in another community facility. They too kept her for only a few hours and said she was "impossible" and they would not care for her. We then tried a community based home in Tennessee that supposedly had one on one care. Tammy saw where the worker had the put the keys that "locked" her in and she stole the keys. She unlocked the door, ran away, and went to a house several blocks away, and knocked on the door. This was where she was supposed to have "one-on-one" care. They called the police and it took four policemen to get her into the car.

She then was placed in a group home in Olney. They frequently only had one person on staff. Tammy become violent, and they could not deal with the problem, so they called the police. It again took four policemen to subdue her, and by the time we arrived the next day she was at the police station. She was finally seen by a doctor and he ordered that she move to Murray Center. She has thrived at Murray Center. Within a year her behaviors decreased, she is happy, and very well adjusted. We take her home to visit, but when we do she will no longer stay over at our house...she wants to "go home" to Murray Center. We are so grateful for the care she receives at Murray Center. We especially appreciate the dedicated medical staff at the Center. They call us when ever Tammy has any problems, and they let us know about everything!!!! If Murray Center closes its doors where will someone like our Tammy live. It is obvious from four failed community placements that the community is NOT prepared to care for someone with her specialized needs. We know that in the community the only way they could possibly care for her is to drug her into a stupor, and then what quality of life would she have. Murray Center has the experience, the staff, and the knowledge in how to deal with severely behaviorally challenged mentally handicapped people. Don't take away Tammy's home. The community continues to make promises but these never materialize.....if four placements have failed, what makes the Governor think the next one would work. Use common sense and decency and keep Murray Center open, or there will be dreadful consequences for our loved ones and the community.

Tammy's parents' - Joe and Teresa Hill 618-599-7838

March 19, 2012

Vicki Spears
27 Oak Park Dr. W
Centralia, Illinois, 62801
618-533-7919

I am writing to oppose the closure of Murray Developmental Center. I have worked at Murray for 31 years, following my mother who started working there when it was Murray Children Center in 1964. Murray has been a big part of my life for a long time. I have seen many changes to Murray over the years, but something that hasn't changed is the quality of care that is given to the people who live here. This is not an institution, but a group of homes where friendships are made, life skills are learned, celebrations are shared, and staff are like family to the people who live here. Many of our people that live here have previously lived in Group homes and failed. Group Homes have fewer staff and do not have 24 hour nursing. The people that live here have all that and more. At Murray we provide more structure and have qualified staff to meet the needs of medically and behaviorally challenged people. We do refer people to less structured living placements. Most all the programs that we train on are to enable the person to live in a less restrictive environment. The people that live here are a part of the community and have friendships outside of Murray. They spend their money at the local businesses; they enjoy the local Recreation Center, attend local churches, attend local sporting events, have picnics at local parks and do other activities in the community. Some of the people who live here vote at election time.

They are citizens of Centralia, Illinois 62801.

I respectfully ask you to keep Murray Center open.

Vicki Spears

April 4, 2012

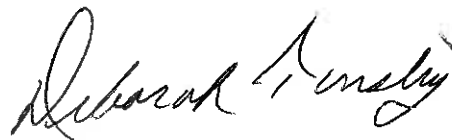
Dear Committee:

Please support us in the fight to keep Murray Developmental Center from closing. This is one of the most ill-advised decisions the governor has ever made. The citizens of this state expect him to listen to everyone, not just special interest groups and that isn't happening. Murray Center is a wonderful home for its residents and provides their families with peace of mind. Don't these people deserve at least that much out of life? The disabled are easy to push around but that doesn't make it ethical or moral. The residents can't fight for what they want and need and many of the families don't know how. Murray Center is a safe and well-run facility where the residents and their families are *happy* and want to stay. That should matter to someone.

Closing Murray Center will not fix the financial problems of this state. The residents will still have to be taken care of and many of them will end up in another state-operated facility at the same cost. No money will be saved and they will be much farther from their families in much bigger institutions. Money will still have to be spent to take care of them if they go to the community and at this point we don't even have an accurate figure to go by. We all know that the costs being quoted are not accurate because the cost of community care is not all inclusive as is the quoted cost for a state operated center. When statistics and facts have to be twisted in order to get others to see things your way it seems like something is wrong.

As for the "improved quality of life" phrase being thrown around isn't that just someone's opinion? Whose? Isn't that a subjective value? Determined by whom? Not the residents or their families. I think we should give them credit for knowing what's best for them and their loved ones.

Thank you for your help.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Dunlap". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Deborah" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Dunlap".

This commentary is in protest of the closing of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

To Better Protect and Serve as Caretakers

To close MC would be to devastate a community of caretakers. The employees at Murray Developmental Center serve as caretakers. This is a life-changing experience. The experience causes one to be on the alert at all times...listening to the cry of a child in WalMart or listening to the family in the next bed at the local ER. Centralia is full of these caretakers due to the type of community we are...only Murray Center caretakers are more intense...the senses are heightened due to the needs of medically contradicted individuals. Murray Center caretakers are specialists. They become familiar with a certain sound of an individual and understand how to interpret the sound. Yes, there are some residents that could possibly make it outside of Murray Center, but are very few. With the population of 275 and the majority profoundly retarded, it is the latter that won't receive the level of care they need and deserve. Many of the parents who are still the individuals' lives, are elderly now and not able to travel as well as in the past. They remain concerned and interested in their children's lives.

In addition to serving individuals of Murray Center daily, caretakers are there when residents attend visits to physicians and emergency rooms. If ever you have served as a caretaker especially at a visit to a physician or emergency room, the caretaker is there to give medical history of an individual. The chart is always nearby, but the physician doesn't read the lifelong history of an individual during a visit. Every visit is a "new day" and a "new visit." The caretakers' heads are filled with usual behavior and/or medical history. When an employee spends two shifts of three, he/she gets to know a resident personally; hence, the value of the knowledge of the caretaker. I can also speak of this caretaker responsibility in my personal life. I have seven siblings who vary in age 20 years my elder of whom need "representation" for medical needs during visits to the hospital and nursing homes. I also care for my 91-year-old mother whose health is immaculate with the exception of arthritis, seizures and reoccurring urinary tract infections. I have spent many ER visits with her while she undergoes the routine blood tests and whatever tests are ordered. I'm there when she is incoherent. I usually ask that a urinary test be completed. I'm also there to speak for my loved one that "this is not my mother" and further explain that she is not normally like this. On one occasion, she was treated like a psychiatric patient and sedated when she had a UTI. The similarity to my experiences and the employees of Murray Center are that the employees are there when the residents cannot communicate. Who better to "raise" and represent one's loved ones than the employees who "live" with the residents at MC?

Representing a sister at a local nursing home was a horrendous experience. She lay immobile progressively worsening over a four-day time frame. I complained along with her daughter and she was rushed to Barnes Hospital in St. Louis. It was discovered that she had a rare infection in her neck. She underwent fusions and aggressive antibiotic treatment. Prior to the trip to Barnes, I was brushing her hair one day when we removed

her neck brace. The neck brace was on backwards rubbing a sore on her neck. When I replaced the pads inside the neck brace, I washed the pads which had not been replaced since her admission over a month ago. The pads stank and left a ring in a wash basin when I wash them by hand. If this is the environment you have in mind, family members need to make more frequent visits to the facility you plan to move their loved ones. They will need to micromanage the living in the new facility. These facilities cost near the per diem of MC, but the residents will not receive near the quality of care to which they are accustomed.

Commitment

Murray Developmental Center is a place where individuals live and can lie down after a long day of activity and feel safe not only for the individuals but also their families. Murray Center is a facility to give families an opportunity to return to their homes knowing that their loved ones are safe and live in an environment the loved ones enjoy.

I sought a position with the State of Illinois after our son was born. I wanted a more stable method of caring for my family. I began my career in what used to be Public Aid and is now Healthcare & Family Services. I held the positions of Office Assistance, Clerical Office Administrator, Career Services Trainee and Caseworker. As I worked my way up, there wasn't always extra money. I have done what many State employees have done...made a commitment and waited for the end result...retirement. After experiencing the first layoff in 2003, I accepted a position 60+ miles away. After a year, I was able to transfer to Murray Developmental Center as a Habilitation Program Coordinator and later became a Business Manager specializing more in each position. Over the years, I have held on with dear life as changes have taken place with the State and devastating cuts were made and positions remained unfilled. When positions aren't filled, the specialization and experience dissipated a little more.

Amidst the closure of Murray Center, the housing market in this area will further decrease with the higher rate of unemployment. The decision to close Murray Center is clenching Centralia's fate. The residents of this city including those who live at Murray Developmental Center nor State employees can fix the broken financial problems within the State. We diligently work including many who live at Murray Developmental Center and work at Kaskaskia Workshop, pay taxes, pay state and federal taxes and rely on political prowess to make decisions economically and financially for us. Instead of closing Murray Center, concentration should be made to fill vacancies and further train employees to ensure individuals receive the best of care. State employees nor those who live at Murray Developmental Center created this financial problem; we are the victims of it.

AFSCME has provided salaries that "draw" well-qualified employees to care for special-needs individuals. The turnover in a CILA is "what it is..." a lot of turnover of employees, not only direct care staff but also with administration. AFSCME has also provided a method of further training through upward mobility which better qualifies a

employees as nurses, social workers, etc., while continuing to work in the same environment.

Individuals' Rights

Although compelling, the Ligas Consent Decrees allowed individuals to move from an ICF/DD facility into a community-based setting, who could image that individuals would have no choice but to leave due to closure of all ICF/DD State-operated facilities forcing all into community-based facilities. The following was extracted from the DHS website under the Overview of the Ligas v. Hamos Lawsuit:

“• Services for Individuals Currently Residing in ICFs/DD

Within six years of approval of the Decree, all individuals living in ICFs/DD as of the effective date of the Decree who have affirmatively requested Community-Based Settings will move to Community-Based Settings. Placements must be implemented for one-third of all such individuals every two years of this six-year period. For those individuals who wish to continue living in an ICF/DD, the Decree requires the State to honor that choice and to continue to provide adequate funding to meet the needs of such individuals.”

Also on the DHS website under Ligas Implementation Plan, is the following:

“The Decree does not force individuals who do not want community-based services or placement to move. Nor does it force providers to close beds or enter into downsizing agreements with the State against their will.

The tenets of the Decree will assist the DDD in expanding its community-based system to meet the growing demand for those services, while continuing to honor an individual's choice in deciding on the types of services and settings he or she prefers in order to live a personally fulfilling and productive life...”

As equally compelling in the Decree, those individuals who want to be placed in a community-based setting were to complete a form to the Office of the Attorney General, and those individuals who do not wish to move to a community-based setting should do nothing. If none of the individuals at Murray Developmental Center indicated the want to move, it appears that they are being forced to move whether they like it or not.

As professionals in your field, we rely on you to make the best choices for all of us. Please, I implore you to respond with the humanitarian decision to look elsewhere for your solutions to the State of Illinois' problems. DO NOT CLOSE MURRAY DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER.

Sincerely,

Judy Howard-Chappell

Business Manager
Patient Resource Unit
Murray Developmental Center
chap@charter.net

3/14/2012

Dear Governor Pat Quinn,

I would like to share with you the benefits our students have received from the Murray Center in Centralia, IL. This state operated development center that serves 275 individuals has provided opportunities for the students in our occupational therapy program to have valuable fieldwork experiences. The occupational therapists at this facility have provided structured, supervised experiences to mentor our students as they apply their academic knowledge to a real world setting.

The occupational therapy services and programs at the Murray Center serve individuals ages 19 through 70 plus. These individuals are enabled to live in a supportive environment. Occupational therapy provides numerous services including: assistance in safe wheelchair positioning; upper extremity splinting and range of motion to address contractures and prevent further skin breakdown; sensory stimulation programs to enhance cognition and facilitation of sensory processing to support calm, functional behaviors; creation and implementation of adaptive feeding equipment and feeding positioning and swallowing for adequate nutritional intake and independence with eating. These services are valuable to the residents of Murray Center and are excellent learning experiences for our students. Students will also miss possible job opportunities this area.

I hope you will consider the services and educational opportunities the Murray Center provides as you contemplate the proposed closure of the Murray Center.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Katrina Serwe, MS, OTR, ATP, CLT
Concordia University Wisconsin
Assistant Professor
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, HS 137
Occupational Therapy Department
12800 North Lake Shore Drive
Mequon, WI 53097-2402
262.243.4238
fax 262.243.2938
Katrina.serwe@cuw.edu



Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market

3213 S. Park Ave.
Herrin, IL 62948
618-942-6902
Fax 618-942-6658

March 16, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is being written in support of Murray Center located in Centralia, Illinois. As the director of the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market Occupational Therapy Assistant Program I am concerned about the potential loss of a valuable clinical site. Murray Center provides quality clinical experiences with individuals who have developmental disabilities. In our rural area, this type of clinical experience is difficult to attain but critical to the overall knowledge and preparation of quality occupational therapy assistants.

Approximately twenty occupational therapy assistants graduate each year from the Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market program. The closing of Murray Center would eliminate potential job opportunities for our graduates. Several of our students are considered "non-traditional" students and need to establish employment in close proximity to their families and homes.

Please take this letter into consideration when reviewing the decision to close Murray Center. The Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market supports the center staying open.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Langley, MS. Ed., COTA/L
Director

Occupational Therapy Assistant Program
Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market

Dear CGFA:

A letter has come to our home saying that Murray Center in Centralia is going to close. I know that most states have closed their facilities similar to Murray. I understand that this sort of facility is not necessarily seen as a proper undertaking for the states, as opposed to non-profit or for-profit agencies. This all sounds good on paper and is politically popular.

The problem is that Murray is an exceptionally good facility for a certain population of developmentally handicapped individuals--ones in need of more intensive and extensive care than the average.

Our daughter resided in three ICFDDs prior to Murray. Each one had the same problem: her disabilities were so challenging that the facility could not genuinely meet her needs, each facility resorted to added medication in an attempt to help her adapt, and she did not respond well to the medications. She had a near-fatal reaction to medication at the third ICFDD and was hospitalized for weeks.

At that time it was recommended that we consider Murray. Because of prior informational meetings given by the school district our daughter attended, we had a very negative view of state operated facilities and did not want to consider such a placement. We finally agreed to a meeting with the staff from Murray, some professionals from her previous facility, and medical personnel who were very familiar with her.

We were astonished at the understanding of her problems and the wisdom in how to handle her. The Murray staff demonstrated in that meeting. For the first time in her life we had professionals who could cheerfully face the challenges her care would entail without denial of the seriousness of her problems or threats that if she did not improve she would have to leave yet another facility--AND THEY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IN MANY AREAS IMPROVEMENT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE OR EXTREMELY SLOW AND DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE but that Murray would accept her for who and what she is and help her be her best. This has been the best environment our daughter could be in--accepting but encouraging.

I do not want to see such a professional and caring and SUCCESSFUL facility closed when the most challenged and challenging of Illinois's residents need the care it provides.

Do not balance the budget of Illinois on the backs of its most vulnerable citizens. Murray is not just another facility, whose residents can easily be accepted into other facilities and thrive. Murray has many "hard cases" who need to be there for months, to get rehab so they can go to group homes or ICFDDs, or who need to be there for decades, even a lifetime, because their needs are so challenging that they do not "fit" in facilities with less round-the-clock staffing, fewer professionals in house, or budgetary concerns which limit the staff-to-client ratio.

It has been an enormous relief to our daughter to be in a housing situation where her genuine, challenging, critical needs can be met without uproar or recrimination. Her medication load was reduced, her seizure activity decreased extremely dramatically, and she could enjoy life again. I wish we could care for her at home--but that is not possible. I would love it if she could adjust to a local group home or ICFDD, but the chances are worse than slim. Murray is her home and does a better job than her father and I could, or than any other facility we have ever heard of or seen, short of extremely high-end private facilities (which the state is welcome to pay for after they discover she cannot be cared for via group homes or ICFDDs).

Sandra Kubbs 2805 Carrelton Dr, Champaign Il 61821 akubbs@comcast.net 217-356-3696



27210 College Road
Centralia, IL 62801
618-545-3000 www.kaskaskia.edu

Kaskaskia College
Dr. Jim Underwood, President
Board of Trustees
Mr. Jim Beasley Mr. Kelly Bennett
Dr. Dee Boswell Mr. Bryan Cain
Mr. John W. Hawley Mr. Jack Mays
Ms. Linda Stover
Ms. Chelsea Miller, Student Trustee

March 15, 2012

Mr. Jamie Veach, Director
Murray Developmental Center
1535 W. McCord Street
Centralia, IL 62801

Dear Jamie:

Kaskaskia College has had a long, successful, and productive history of partnering with the Murray Developmental Center for providing programs and services. This has been a wonderful reciprocal relationship with the Center's clients and staff attending functions at the College and assisting with the educational needs of the College, while the College's faculty and staff are serving needs at the Center. A few of these major areas of mutual arrangements are:

1. The Murray Center serves as a clinical site for our RN and PN Nursing programs. KC students in these programs are receiving valuable training in a clinical setting at the Center. Because of the close proximity of the Center to our main campus, the Center serves as an excellent instructional site for many of our Nursing students. Conversely, the Center's clients receive the benefits of the controlled nursing services from our students and faculty. I'm proud to add that our student evaluations reflect very high marks for their experiences at the Murray Center. Not having these clinical experiences available at the Murray Center for our Nursing students would be detrimental to our Nursing programs. Given the major shortage of nurses in rural and south central Illinois, as well as throughout the state and nation, we need all available clinical sites that are accessible for preparing nurses for meeting this major demand.
2. Through the KC Reading Link program we make available tutorial services to the Center's clients for literacy and GED preparation assistance. We provide these services through a large number of volunteer tutors and College staff, serving our entire College district. We are committed to improving the literacy rates in our region and we are pleased to make available locally these services for the Murray Center, when needed. Not only are formal tutorial processes available, but also volunteers are available to spend time just reading

Mr. Jamie Veach, Director

March 15, 2012

Page 2

to clients in an informal manner, which is a very valuable process. People enjoy and are proud to have the opportunity to serve the clients at the Center.

3. Our scholarship student-athletes and coaches serve the Center in so many ways. The Murray center games are a wonderful example of KC coaches and student-athletes serving the Center. Other projects our athletic department has assisted the Center with include: serving concessions at Center events, planting flowers in the many flower gardens as a part of the Center's beautification program, reading program, and welcoming and assisting Center clients and staff at College events, to name just a few. It should be noted that our faculty, staff, and students benefit greatly from their participation at the Center. Their rewards for hard work are in the smiles and satisfaction of accomplishments of the Center's staff and clients. In 2010, the College was recognized by the Illinois Human Services Division with the Human Service Award for the volunteer hours and projects we were involved in partnership with the Murray Developmental Center during Fiscal Year 2009-10. This was a state-wide award for volunteerism in a partnership with the Murray Developmental Center. We are extremely proud of this wonderful honor that is a reflection of the importance of the services under this partnership.
4. All of our scholarship students are involved in service-learning, and as such volunteer in many different ways to serve organizations throughout our College district. The Center is one of the entities students serve, as needed. We have found over the years that once students have experienced volunteerism, they are hooked. They learn the importance of citizenship and putting others ahead of self, and the experiences at the Murray Center are great examples of our students expanding their understanding of the importance of service. The Center is helping our students directly in learning a core value of caring for others. Having the Center available for the learning experiences of our students is critical to a comprehensive education.

The Murray Developmental Center is a valued partner of Kaskaskia College. There are many more activities and events in which our faculty, staff, and students participate with the Center, but suffice it to say that we are proud to be serving the Center and hope that we will be able to for many years in the future. I want to also mention the staff members at the Center are

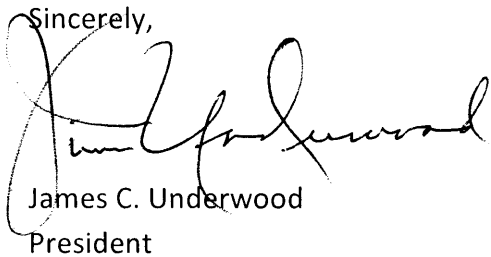
Mr. Jamie Veach

March 15, 2012

Page 3

superb to work with. I am very impressed with their commitment to the clients and to the Center. They have a passion for what they do in providing the highest possible quality of life of the residents and clients. We stand by to continue to serve the people at the Murray Developmental Center in all ways that we possibly can be of service. Thank you and the staff members at the Center for all that you do in serving others.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James C. Underwood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "U".

James C. Underwood
President

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Kaskaskia College Board of Trustees as follows:

WHEREAS, the Murray Center has a long history of providing quality service to the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the Murray Center is all about caring for others and this facility has been an effective operation for several years and a wonderful home to many clients over the years; and

WHEREAS, the Murray Center has long provided employment opportunities for residents of the region; and

WHEREAS, many central and southern Illinois areas are already burdened by the loss of large numbers of desperately needed jobs, resulting in difficult times for many area families; and

WHEREAS, the region having unemployment rates exceeding both state and federal levels is already recognized as distressed; and

WHEREAS, the closure of this facility will result in devastating and long lasting effects on the current residents of Murray Center; and

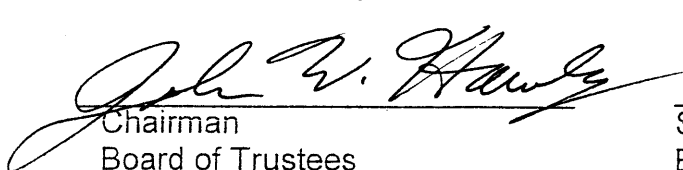
WHEREAS, the closure of this facility will result in devastating and long lasting effects on the economies of the region; and

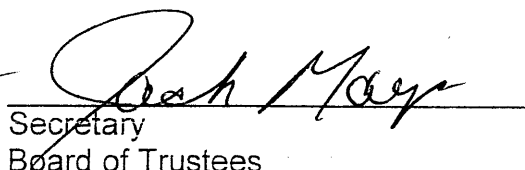
WHEREAS, the Murray Center has many volunteers serving the facility and programs at a cost savings to the State; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, has proposed the closing of the Murray Center.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, the Kaskaskia College Board of Trustees respectfully presents this Resolution to The Honorable Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, expressing that the closing of the Murray Center is not in the best interest of the citizens of Illinois, and therefore, request reconsideration of the proposed closing of said facility.

Dated this 15th day of March, 2012


Chairman
Board of Trustees


Secretary
Board of Trustees

To Whom It May Concern,

Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL should not close. Murray Center is a home for the entire population who reside here. It is comfort for them to know that they have a place to call home with caring people to provide support for them. Many of the employees who work here have been here for several years. A large group of residents have lived here since they were in their early childhood. This is the only place they know as home. I am sure you would not want to be forced out of your home because the state thought they could save some money. The residents that reside here are vulnerable in the general population. They did not ask to be this way. We need to provide the care that is necessary to keep them safe.

I am a social work intern from SIUE doing my practicum for my BSW this year. I have seen the caring and compassion that is strived to care for the residents. The staff goes above and beyond the call of duty to provide the best quality of life for the residents. The buildings are well kept and a safe environment. The residents are never bored. Activities are provided everyday to keep them engaged in the community. I have worked at a 16 bed ICF/DD facility for 5 years. The care that was done at the group home does not compare to the care here at Murray Center. I have seen how hard it is for the staff to get Murray Center residents into group homes. Many times the group homes are unable to accommodate to the needs of the residents. If currently the community homes are unable to take some individuals, then what is going to happen when Murray Center closes and they have to take them? The quality of care for the residents is going to go down. If the residents were able to live in community homes they would be in there and not at Murray Center.

On site at Murray Center they have a wide array of services for the residents. The services include but not limited to dental, X-ray, pharmacy, dietary, barber, and day training. If these residents were to be placed in the community these services would not be readily available to them. On top of the services, there are caring doctors who are available at anytime to help with the medical needs of the residents. What community living home would be able to provide this type of care at any time of day? The state will have to pay more for the medical care of the individuals since they would not be taken care of as well as they would have at Murray Center. Preventative care is important to the state of Illinois. I believe that Murray Center does just that. When an issue arises they take action and deal with the problem before any major medical interventions need to be taken.

What am I to say to the residents who have came up to me asking, "Why are they closing Murray Center?" or "Where am I going to live?" This is a question that they need answered. I hope the answer is, "You are going to stay right here at Murray Center, YOUR home."

So please reconsider the closure of Murray Center. This is a home just like yours and mine. We would not want to be kicked out so they do not deserve this either. The state needs to figure out alternatives to save money then close a perfectly productive home.

Sincerely,

Megan Humphrey

Social Work Intern, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville



BISHOP GEOFFREY V. DUDLEY, SR., D. MIN.
Senior Pastor

Dear Legislator:

Governor Quinn is planning the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. This facility serves the most fragile, developmentally disabled citizens of our state. These residents require around the clock care for their very basic needs. Many need to be fed, bathed, and dressed, and need constant supervision. The center is also home to many residents with very severe emotional and psychological needs. Due to the professional care they receive from the staff at Murray Center they have been able to thrive and become part of not just the Murray Center community, but our local communities. They are involved in activities in the community and have become our friends and neighbors.

The center is home to almost 300 residents and provides jobs to over 500 people. The loss of these 500 jobs, but more importantly will take away these residents' home. For many of these residents Murray Center has been their home for over 30 years. Do not take away their home, and livelihood of over 500 people.

We demand that when you vote, you vote to keep Murray Center open and adequately funded so these very vulnerable citizens of Illinois can continue to be productive, happy, and safe. It is your responsibility and job to make the right, moral decision for these residents.

Remember...what if this was your child? Every one of these residents is someone's loved one. Don't take away their home!!!


KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN AND FUNDED!

REMEMBER.....IT IS SOMEONE'S HOME!!!!!!!

Bishop Geoffrey V. Dudley, Sr. D. Min
Senior Pastor



Association of Illinois
Electric Cooperatives

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

N. Duane Noland
President / CEO

April 12, 2012

To Members of the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability:

I am writing to seek your commission's recommendation that the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center remain open. As a former Member of the Illinois General Assembly, I have had the opportunity to visit our states' facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities in Decatur, Springfield, Jacksonville and Centralia.

The Murray Center has many residents with severe developmental disabilities that make it impractical to provide care at home or in a smaller group home. I am personally acquainted with two residents from the Decatur area who have complex health needs and challenging behavior. They require the vital support services and medical care from the trained staff at the Murray Center.

As an advocate of community agencies, I have always supported their mission and requests for state appropriations. However, many Murray residents have previously tried local placements that were not suited for their complex health needs and were eventually returned to the Murray Center.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter and concern for the residents and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Duane Noland".

N. Duane Noland



2735 E. Broadway • Alton, IL 62002
618-462-1411 Voice • 618-474-5333 TTY • 618-474-5309 Fax
www.impactcil.org

Board of Directors

Jeff Wilson
President

Susy Woods
Vice President

Ebony Huddleston
Treasurer

Jeffrey Owen
Secretary

Beth Davis
Shellie Lackey
Judy O'Malley
Barb Santos
Jeanette Small
Rance Thomas
Bishop Samuel White

Proud member of



April 16, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear COGFA Members;

I am writing as the Executive Director of a Center for Independent Living, as a concerned citizen and as an individual with a disability to provide written testimony to support the closure of the Murray Developmental Center. Every American Citizen has the basic right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Residents of the Murray Center should be no exception. All individuals should have the right to live in a place of their own choosing in the community with the supports and services they choose. It is time that residents of Murray have the right to live in the community as anyone else. There is evidence that shows that independent living not only saves the state money but increases individuals' quality of life.

As an individual with a physical disability since birth, I have been living on my own since I attended college. If I did not have the opportunity to live in the community, things would be very different for me. I doubt that I would have been employed at a Center for Independent Living for over 25 years having a Leadership role and paying my share of taxes in my State and local community.

I would also like to make you aware that there are a total of 23 Centers for Independent Living, similar to IMPACT CIL throughout Illinois that would be happy to work with residents in making informed choices of where they want to live. Since IMPACT opened our doors in 1985, we have been serving individuals with all disabilities, including individuals with Developmental and/or Intellectual Disabilities with great success. As individuals with disabilities ourselves, we understand firsthand what it means to be segregated, excluded and denied our basic rights. It is this firsthand experience that allows us to be peer mentors and to assist individuals with disabilities in being full participants in their own communities.

In summary, I am requesting that COGFA members vote for closure of Murray and support the Governor's Rebalancing Initiative. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony.

Sincerely;

Cathy Contarino
Executive Director

IMPACT promotes pride and respect of people with disabilities by sharing the tools that are necessary to take control of one's own life. IMPACT advocates full community participation, with supports, of all citizens.

United Way Partnership/INCIL Member

11 April 2012

To the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability:

Throughout my life, I've experienced life with people with a variety of disabilities, including developmental disabilities and cognitive disabilities. I cannot envision a life without them in it, friends and family alike. All of these people have experienced life in the community using home based services and have done so successfully. I have worked as a personal attendant in human services, brother and son to siblings and parents with disabilities, worked as a teacher in special education and currently work in an independent living center seeking accessible and affordable housing. My variety of experiences across all domains of living have granted me unique perspectives of independence and interdependency very successful with appropriate supports. I feel strongly the towns and employees and residents at each of these centers can continue to thrive and provide excellent service and do so in the community using home based supports. Any argument indicating greater affordability, loss of jobs and jarring circumstances for residents used to a particular lifestyle are arguing from a perspective of fear; fear of the unknown and fear of change. If they use even half the love they have demonstrated at public hearings condemning the closures to instead implement home based services, these towns would be beacons of light to independent living and the Constitutional right afforded to EVERY citizen in this great country.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Nance', with a stylized, cursive script.

Scott Nance

4/11/12

Jane Gault
1755 Meadowlark
The Villages FL
32162

Dear COGFA Representatives

I am writing to oppose the closing of Murray Center. I am unable to attend the hearing because I live in FL. My brother Scott was forced to move from Howe a few years ago. He is receiving excellent care from the dedicated staff & I can see evidence of this when I visit. His health needs & challenging behavior would make it impossible for him to live in a community based home. He requires 24/7 care often on a 1:1 basis. In addition - how will an economically depressed area such as Centralia survive

with a severe loss of jobs?

What will become of all these very severely disabled "forgotten" residents with nowhere to turn?

Please take all of this into consideration before making the decision to close Murray.

Sincerely,

Jane Coult

6007 Mr. Quine 3/1
Chgo. Ill. 60636

(44)

Mr. Quine

(Please, Please don't close the
Truman ~~Dr. Murray~~ Development Center)

Don Mary & Stewart Quine Baron
aunt. This facility is the prayer
~~answered~~ answered for my nephew. Please,
Please don't punish them

PLEASE SAY YES to
the Center
keeping open

Thank you Blessing

6009 So. Racine St.
Chgo. Ill. 60636
4/12/12

Mr. Quincy

I'm (Irvin Brown) cousin
Irvin

Mr. Quincy Stewart I'm writing
to ask you re-consider, the
closing the Warren M. Murray Development
Center. I find the facility very
accommodating to young cousin growth
& developing. The staff is (good)
(sent) as far as their care and
attention they (provide) please Mr.

Quinn reconsider and think of
one's hurting that's incapable
of surviving in today society

Thank You
E

Please Please
Reconsider

4-13-12

In regards to Murrey Center possible closing. I don't agree the center should be closed down due to the individuals that reside there & call the center home as this is the only place alot of these people know. Also I believe it would cause quite a strain on our community. Please consider keeping Murrey Center open.

Thank You,

Susan L. Stanf.

Opposition to Murray Dev. Center Closure

Parent

4-12-12

I was asked to write a letter as I have before to Gov. Quinn & told him a lot about Murray Center & how grateful we are to have Murray. They know how to care for all who is out there and they do a terrific job. I don't think a lot of them will not stand a move. I know as my son was at Lincoln which was called a snake pit & we couldn't just go in the building where he was staying in, we had to go to a different building & they would bring him to us. They were treated like animals. We knew Dwight Friedrich & he asked if we wanted to have Steve moved to Anna, and we said ~~yes~~ yes. Well he was there for a while then they put him in a home for awhile

over

then put him in a nursing home.
 He ran off once, so they put
 him back to Ames Center. Every
 time we went to see him he had
 a black eye or a broken finger, one
 time a broken toe. I would go
 home and cry for weeks it was
 so bad. Some of the kids would
 be on the floor in the hall
 naked & wet on the floor.
 The social worker talked to us
 and ask if we would like to
 have Steve here at Murry. He
 said he would take one of their
 kids. So that's how we got him
 in at Murry. I can go see him
 any time here and go to his room
 and visit him. Murry is so much
 better then the others are. I don't
 go home & cry after a visit with
 him at Murry. I would rather for
 me and him be in the ground as
 to see him being put out. I can't

understand how one man has the authority to do what he is trying to do. Murry has so much more equipment for the ones who need special care.

I told Hon. Quinn if we had some laws in their country we wouldn't need all these prisons, he could close some of them.

As Dr. Dee said his inhuman or what he's trying to do in. I sent him the letter Dr. Dee had in the paper.

I hope & pray we can keep Murry Center. We sure need it. I'm sure all parents are like me very depressed right now.

My son lived in hell until he got to go to Murry. I can take him out & he doesn't shake his head no, as he doesn't want to go back in he points his hands to his forehead to go back in. Thank God for Murry
- Aileen Reese - Center..

RESOLUTION NO. 2012-1

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE WARREN G. MURRAY CENTER

WHEREAS, Governor Quinn has initiated dialogue on the closure and/or reduction of services at Centers serving the developmentally disabled, and

WHEREAS, the closure of the Warren G. Murray Center would result in the displacement of 276 residents and directly impacting the lives of 225 families, and

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois does not have viable alternative options of care for the residents upon their displacement, and

WHEREAS, the closure of the facility would result in the elimination of 600 jobs and a payroll of \$38.1 million in a region currently struggling with record high unemployment, and

WHEREAS, the facilities are in excellent condition with a physical layout that is conducive to this operation and certified for expansion possibilities of up to 400 residents,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY **CITY OF BREESE, CLINTON COUNTY, ILLINOIS**

Section One: The City of **Breese**, urges the State of Illinois to continue their financial commitment to the operations at Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia

Section Two: Due to the local economic climate, the South Central Illinois Growth Association urges the State of Illinois to oppose consideration of the closure of the Warren G. Murray Center and consider expansion of services.

PASSED THIS 7th DAY of FEBRUARY 2012


Charles E. Hilmes, Mayor

Attest:


Robert J. Venhaus, City Clerk

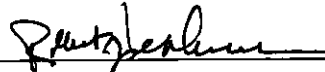
Voting "aye": Robert Berndsen, Bill Fischer, Debbie Koetting, Carl Ratermann,
Paul Steinman, Norb Tebbe, Kevin Timmermann.

Voting "nay": None.

Absent: Gary Usselmann.

CERTIFICATION

I, Robert J. Venhaus, City Clerk of the City of Breese, Clinton County, Illinois do hereby certify the foregoing Resolution #2012-1 is the true and correct original resolution passed and approved by the Breese City Council at a regular meeting duly held on February 7, 2012.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert J. Venhaus", is written over a horizontal line.

CITY CLERK

(SEAL)

108 E. 16th St.
Centralia, IL 62801
April 11, 2012

COGFA

AHN Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Sir:

My name is Mary Benjamin and I have been employed at Murray Center for 10 years. The Lord put me here for a purpose and I know that he will only put me where I'm supposed to be. The individuals whom live here don't have a choice. Many of them lead ordinary lives like you and I until circumstances changed it all. They will end up in places new to them and will see unfamiliar faces, if they are forced to leave their home. Although some of them may not be vocal, they are aware of changes. The individuals are human beings and should be treated as such. Not all of them have family so therefore, we here at Murray Center are their family. We all take great pride in our jobs and care about the fate of Murray Center.

Sincerely,
Mary L Benjamin



27210 College Road
Centralia, IL 62801
618-545-3000 www.kaskaskia.edu

Kaskaskia College
Dr. Jim Underwood, President
Board of Trustees
Mr. Jim Beasley Mr. Kelly Bennett
Dr. Dee Boswell Mr. Bryan Cain
Mr. John W. Hawley Mr. Jack Mays
Ms. Linda Stover
Ms. Chelsea Miller, Student Trustee

April 5, 2012

Murray Developmental Center
C/O Jamie Veach, Manager
1535 W. McCord Street
Centralia, IL 62801-5805



Dear Mr. Veach:

This letter is in support of keeping the Murray Developmental Center open for serving downstate Illinois. The Center has a long history of providing quality services to Illinois citizens and truly is a wonderful home to many residents.

During its most recent meeting, the Veterans Tribute Committee approved a resolution in support for keeping the Center open. On the back of the resolution is a listing of the names of the committee members who represent communities from throughout the Kaskaskia College District. The goal of the committee is to construct a Tribute to honor veterans, past and present, which have ties to the five main counties in the KC District.

Members of the Tribute Committee feel very strongly about services the Murray Center provides to its clients and to the state and wished their voice to be added in support of keeping the facility open. Please feel free to forward this recommendation to keep the Murray Center open at Centralia. Please let me know if we can be of any assistance at all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Travis Henson'.

Travis Henson
Co-Chair, Veterans Tribute Committee
Enc

RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the Veterans Tribute Committee as follows:

WHEREAS, the Murray Center has a long history of providing quality service to the State of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the Murray Center is all about caring for others and this facility has been an effective operation for several years and a wonderful home to many clients over the years; and

WHEREAS, the Murray Center has long provided employment opportunities for residents of the region; and

WHEREAS, many central and southern Illinois areas are already burdened by the loss of large numbers of desperately needed jobs, resulting in difficult times for many area families; and

WHEREAS, the region having unemployment rates exceeding both state and federal levels is already recognized as distressed; and

WHEREAS, the closure of this facility will result in devastating and long lasting effects on the current residents of Murray Center; and

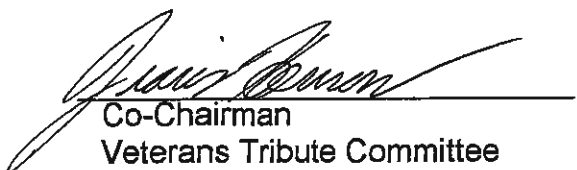
WHEREAS, the closure of this facility will result in devastating and long lasting effects on the economies of the region; and

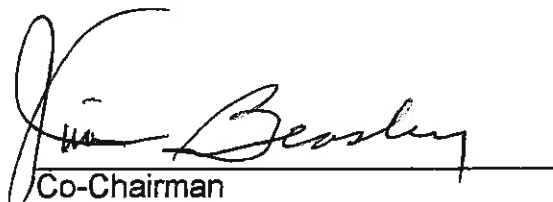
WHEREAS, the Murray Center has many volunteers serving the facility and programs at a cost savings to the State; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, has proposed the closing of the Murray Center.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, the members Veterans Tribute Committee respectfully presents this Resolution to The Honorable Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, expressing that the closing of the Murray Center is not in the best interest of the citizens of Illinois, and therefore, request reconsideration of the proposed closing of said facility.

Dated this 19th day of March, 2012


Co-Chairman
Veterans Tribute Committee


Co-Chairman
Veterans Tribute Committee

Approved unanimously by members of the Veterans Tribute Committee

Roy Aarons
Rev. Hubert Bankhead
Frank Beasley
Kathryn Beasley
Don Berdeaux
Dr. Dee Boswell
Sarah Cary
Ray Kloeckner
Margaret Loomis
Chris Lyons
Les Moulton
Jeannette Patrick
Tom Sabo
Frank Smith
Judy Smith
Suzanne Christ
Craig Roper
Jon Boehning
Dr. Jim Underwood
Nancy Kinsey
Joe Kurwicki
Mary Jo Jones
Donna Matanane

Hello, my name is Josh Tate and I have worked at Murray Center for 5 years. I feel it is a mistake to close Murray Center for many reasons; such as uprooting individuals from their "family", putting residents in a community setting that is not adequate for some if not most of their needs, and causing devastation to the local economy from unemployment.

To close Murray Center would impact the residents the most because they will be uprooted from their "family". Now when I say "family" I am talking about staff that care for these individuals day in day out for 8-16 hours a day. When some, if not most of our residents look at staff they do not look at us as just caregivers, they look at us in different light. To the majority of them we ARE the parental figures in their life. I mean we feed them, we bathe them, we teach them the difference between right and wrong, we dress them and we do a lot of the little things that a parent would do. Most of the individuals I am talking about do not have any family around, if at all, and that is why we as technicians, nurses, and professional staff try and fill that void.

Another reason I think it would be bad to close down Murray Center is that we have some of the best staff around and one of the nicest facilities in the state. Some of the residents that reside at Murray Center have very severe medical

issues that require 24 hr medical supervision which is provided by Registered Nurses on grounds 24 hrs at Murray Center. Other individuals that reside at Murray have some rather intense behavioral issues. Sometimes it may require multiple staff to assist when someone has a behavioral episode, and this is for a single individual and is capable of happening 24 hours a day. Also, our campus is one nicest you will find. When you come on to the grounds of Murray Center you realize we have a little bit of everything. Our residents are able to enjoy many activities right here on the grounds. From the gymnasium where they can play basketball or use the stage for the Christmas program or other plays, to the swimming pool that the residents are able to utilize, to the large common ground area where residents can go to dances, throw the football around, play frisbee, baseball, or even fly a kite. Another positive about our facility is that all of our Residential buildings are single floored and handicap accessible.

The last thing I would like talk about is the effect it would have on the local economy. If Murray Center shuts down it will affect every business in town. Everyone from local fast food places to Automotive shops to Grocery stores and everyone in between all businesses will be affected with over 550 employees, Warren & Murray

center is one of the largest employers in the region and when that many people don't have a job it will start a very large trickle down affect. Before you know it there not much opportunity for employment around here and then people have to move out of the area to find employment and this once vibrant community and region turns into a shell of its once prominent self.

So in closing I would like to reintroduce some of my reasons for wanting to keep Warner's Muttley Center open. Reasons such as uprooting individuals from their "family", providing inadequate care in a community setting and having a negative impact on the regional economy.

Thank you

Todd Titte



MARION COUNTY BOARD

Marion County Courthouse • Room 103 • P.O. Box 637 • Salem, Illinois 62881
(618) 548-3400 or 548-3868 • FAX (618) 548-2226

Terry R. Johnston
Chairman

Richard C. Sinclair
Vice-Chairman

RESOLUTION

No. 2012-4

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE WARREN G. MURRAY CENTER

BOARD MEMBERS

District 1

Dick Hanks

Pamela J. Hawkins

Burton A. Rose

District 2

Bruce H. Hahn

Michael D. Isa

Richard C. Sinclair

District 3

Terry R. Johnston

Bruce L. Parrish

Gregory A. Smith

District 4

Gary Joe Sanders

Gregory C. Schwartz

Deanna T. Warren

District 5

Ty J. Bates

Laura L. Fogleman

Benny L. Glover

WHEREAS, Governor Quinn has initiated dialogue on the closure and/or reduction of services at Centers serving the developmentally disabled; and,

WHEREAS, the closure of the Warren G. Murray Center would result in the displacement of (276) residents and directly impact the lives of (225) families; and,

WHEREAS, the State of Illinois does not have viable alternative options of care for the residents upon their displacement; and,

WHEREAS, the closure of this facility would result in the elimination of (600) jobs and a payroll of (\$8.1) million dollars in a region currently struggling with record high unemployment; and,

WHEREAS, the Warren G. Murray Center is in excellent condition with a physical layout that is conducive to this operation and certified for expansion possibility of up to (400) residents.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE STATE OF ILLINOIS MARION COUNTY BOARD THE FOLLOWING:

1. The Marion County Board urges the State of Illinois to continue their financial commitment to the operations at Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois
2. Due to the Local Economic Climate, the Marion County Board urges the State of Illinois to OPPOSE consideration of the CLOSURE of the Warren G. Murray Center and CONSIDER EXPANSION of services.

Passed and Adopted by the County Board of Marion County Illinois, this 14th day of February, 2012.

Steven A. Fox Marion County
Clerk and Clerk of the County
Board

Terry R. Johnston, Chairman
Marion County Board

2/3/12
Terry R. Johnston
Chairman
for Clerk

my name is mardy willmoth and i work for Murray Developmental Center as a mental health technician. i am writing on behalf of the decision by the governor for closure of this facility. There are many reasons to keep this establishment open, but the main reason is for the residents who reside here. Many of them have been here since the facility first open or have been here many years since then. This is all they know, this is there home, there life, we are there family. Murray Center provides the most adequate care that could possibly be given in our surrounding areas. There are many different reasons these individuals are here. They may have medical issues or behavioral issues. Here at Murray there are the right amount of staffing for any issue that may occur. Our individuals who suffer from behavioral issues are here to keep from harming themselves or others. if they were able to be put in the community that decision would of been made in the beginning of placing them in a home. Murray Center staff provide the individuals with a warm home like environment with the upmost kindness, love, & understanding that allows them to trust and adapt to the normal ways of living in a community when they feel they are ready.

Another important reason to keep Murray Center open is the burden that it would be to take these individuals away from their families by moving them miles away. Some individuals have family members who are elderly and may have an illness which enables them to visit their loved one so far away in another facility rather than close to home. Some of our individuals may not even have any family for what ever reasons and we as their caregivers are all the family they have and in which it takes years to establish that type of relationship from our individuals. If they get uprooted and placed elsewhere they will be devastated, heartbroken + lonely. This could be terrible for their health, some could get deathly sick and may even die.

My final important concern on the closure of this facility is the many employees who will be jobless. Murray Center is one of the most decent paying jobs in our surrounding area of Centralia with health insurance + life insurance for them and their families. Many of us have established a strong life from the many years of employment we have dedicated to Murray Center. There

are many single parent families employed here as well which will make it even harder for them to take care of their families as well. Many of us may lose our homes, our vehicles, or the many things we have earned while employed here at Murray Center, it will also take a toll on all the businesses in our surrounding area, from restaurants to grocery stores, convenience stores to small businesses that Murray Center employees contribute to throughout many of years. This in the end will cause Centralia, Ill. to be as you would say a ghost town. Everyone will end up packing up their families and leaving the area to other states for employment to take care of their families.

In my closing of this letter I can't stress enough of the traumatization this would cause closing the Murray Developmental Center of Centralia, Ill. I ask that you please take this in consideration and rethink your decision.

Sincerely
Mandy Whitworth

FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SYNOD OF LINCOLN TRAILS

Dr. Edwin E. Evans, Pastor



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

April 11, 2012

Name: Dr Ed Evans

Position: - Keep Murray Center Open please!

Testimony - I have been pastor in the Centralia community for 32 years. Murray Center is a vital part of our community. We have an excellent hospital for the residents. We have good workers to staff the facility and the Murray campus is in very good shape. The closure would seriously hurt the community. The residents would be disrupted in any move. This is their good home and caring community.

Thank you

Dr Edwin E Evans

April 8, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear COGFA:

My name is Shelby Riva and I am a parent of a resident at the Warren G. Murray Center who is strongly **opposed** to the closing of the facility.

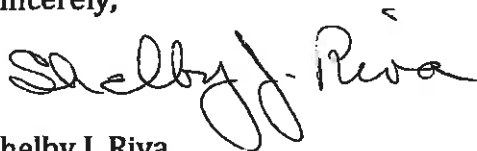
My son has been a resident of the Murray Center for the last 32 years, since age 17. His condition requires 24-hour care and a regimented routine. My fear is that a transfer to an unfamiliar facility will be detrimental to his survival. The people at the Murray Center have been instrumental to his survival and are most suited to caring for his needs. The majority of the residents require the high level of care provided at Murray; any center with a lower level of care would result in an event much like the closure of the Lincoln Developmental Center.

In addition to the personal concerns I have for my son, my opposition to the closure has a great deal to do with the amazing employees of the center and the surrounding community. The closure would result in job loss that the economically depressed community cannot bear.

I am urging you to look past the cost of operation of the center, and see into the people's lives it would destroy.

I appreciate your time and hope you will take my words and the words of others to heart and keep the Warren G. Murray Center open for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shelby J. Riva". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shelby J. Riva

5012 Castlegate Lane
Godfrey, IL 62035
618-467-1097
shelbyriva@att.net

To Whom It May Concern:

4/11/2012

My name is Virgie Moore, and the Murray Center has been a major part of my life for almost 50 years now. Back in 1963 My husband and I had to make the difficult decision to seek help in the care of our son Michael Moore when he was 6 years old. We knew that Michael needed special care and wanted him to be with other children that were more like him. The Murray Center came as a blessing to our family, being that it was then one of the very few facilities of its kind and was close enough that myself, my husband and my four children could visit Michael as often as we liked. Michael has now been a resident of the Murray Center for 49 years and I could not imagine Michael being anywhere else. Michael cannot hear or speak and is only able to communicate with those that have known him the longest. Taking Michael away from the Murray Center I believe would be detrimental to his health, he has never been forced to adapt to a change of this magnitude before. There are so many people that depend on the Murray Center from longtime residents to long time staff. If my son Michael were to move I may not be able to see him anymore; I am 76 years old and unable to travel long distances. I understand that budget cuts happen and state funding is low, but the Murray Center is much too important to be closed. I only pray that the deciding committee take the time to get to know the facility and the people in it before making the decision to close it. Thank you for taking the time to hear what I have to say, I pray that God puts it on your heart to recommend that the Murray Center stay open



Virgie Moore

I would like my written statement filed
email : SeaSea199@gmail.com

April 13, 2012

Janey Willis
608 West Plum Street
Percy, Illinois 72272

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706

I am writing you to ask for your help and support with adverting the closing of Murray Development Center in Centralia, Illinois.

This has been my daughter's home since 1984. The staff and other residents are her family. How can anyone, the commission and the Governor say to her "you and your family can not live here any more because over the years the State of Illinois has made some bad choices with the tax payers money and due to no fault of yours you and your family are being evicted. Yes evicted is what this really is.

All the press and outrage seems to be about the closing of prisons and mental health facilities for the criminally insane. The people in these facilities are there because they were convicted of crimes against society. The residents of Murray are there thru no fault of their own, yet it seems they are not cared about and do not deserve more compassion and help then criminals. What kind of people are making this decision. A decision that may cost my daughter her life as did the 26 residents who were forced to move from Lincoln Developmental Center.

Ask yourselves this question "what would you do if tomorrow some one knocked on the door of your home and told you that you and your family must move out because the person at your door did not manage their money over the years and due to no fault of you or your family you will have to bare the consequences." What would you do? Fight for your home and family. That is what I am asking you to do for my daughter, her family, and Murray Center.

I really fear for my daughter's health physically and mentally if she has to leave Murray. A change such as this in her life and routine will be tragic and a mental strain on her that I am not sure can ever be made right. With my daughter's physical and mental problems she is not suited for a group home and they would not be able to care for her and take care of her needs, I tried this at one time. I also am not trained nor do I have the knowledge to care for her as she needs. Murray has all these things and have proven they can see to her physically and mentally all these years.

Please I am asking you to give my daughter and her family the same compassion and consideration as you do convicted criminals, drug addicts and alcoholics.
Thank you.

Sincerely

Janey Willis

1535 W. M^c Cord
Centralia, IL 62801
April 11, 2012

Commission on Gov. Forecasting & Accountability
Attn: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Sir:

Please do not take my home away from me. I leave my joy and peace to me. Staff is always helpful to me and I have made many friends while here. This is my home and I do not want to leave here. Before I came to Murray's I was in and out of jail, gang-banging, into drugs. I lost my mother when I was 3 yrs. old and I did not have a father figure in my life. The staff used their jobs to care for their families. My grandmother passed away around Christmas Eve. The staff here helped me deal with it and listened to my concerns. My life has changed completely and I'd like for you to consider keeping Murray Center open regardless of what Gov. Quinn says. Some of the people I live with are not able to take care of themselves. Before any decision is made, please come and visit our home and you'll see how Murray's has made a difference in our lives. My staff here

is so dedicated that they have gave
their all and continues to do so daily.
I feel that at the present time, I am not
ready to live out in the community.
I have alot of issues that I am
working on here with the help of staff. I
am not the person that I was when I
first came to Murray Center. My family is
happy with my placement here and I am
able to visit as well as my family doing
the same. I can only hope and pray that
you'll take heed to all I've said
and consider keeping Murray Center
open.

Sincerely,
Emanuel ~~Forrest~~

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Governmental Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

I am very upset to hear that the Governor is considering closing Murray Center. I am a friend of the Bridges family who have a son, Mark, residing there. Plus, I go to the same church.

I remember when Mark was younger and the Bridges had Mark living at home with them, and how hard it was to cope with his behavioral problems. He is autistic to the severe extent, and it got harder and harder for them to deal with his behaviors as he got older.

When Mark was allowed placement in Murray, he and his family both benefited. The family also tells me he is happy there.

I feel that there is a better way to cut costs in Illinois than at the cost of the lives of extremely handicapped with physical and mental disabilities. These individuals have enough problems to deal with just their disabilities. Murray is a haven for them and their families. We should not take their home away from them where they receive vital support services and high quality care.

Sincerely yours,
Opponent to closing Murray and friend of resident, Mark Bridges' family

Gael Homan
Peggy Homan
(Mr. & Mrs.)

4088 VALIER CARPET RD.
TAMAROA, IL 62888

4-12-2012



April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

How can Governor Quinn even consider closing Murray Center in Centralia?

I am a friend of the Bridges family who have a son, Mark Bridges, who is a resident there. It was such a blessing for him and the family to have a place like Murray.

It is hard to believe that the Governor would consider cutting spending by starting out closing places like Murray which cares for individuals who have severe developmental disabilities, complex health needs, and challenging behaviors.

Opponent for closing Murray Center,

Clyde D. Morgenthale



Linda Morgenthaler
6853 State Rte. 154
Tamaroa, IL 62888

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

How can Governor Quinn even consider closing Murray Center in Centralia?

I am a friend of the Bridges family who have a son, Mark Bridges, who is a resident there. It was such a blessing for him and the family to have a place like Murray.

It is hard to believe that the Governor would consider cutting spending by starting out closing places like Murray which cares for individuals who have severe developmental disabilities, complex health needs, and challenging behaviors.

Opponent for closing Murray Center,

Linda D. Morgenthaler

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

I was appalled when I heard about the closing Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. I know our state is in bad financial shape, but making cuts that provide needed services to those with severe developmental disabilities is wrong.

I am a friend of a family that has a son there. The Bridges placed their son, Mark, there several years ago. I know that their child is very handicapped and unable to take care of himself.

All the time I hear about complaints on animal abuse and environmental groups objecting to disturbing certain animal habitats. Much money goes out to help our little furry and feathered friends; how much more worth is the life of these unfortunate severely handicapped human beings who reside at Murray.

Plus, the closure will also bring more unemployment to add to a more struggling economy. It will not only bring a hardship on the resident's families, but also to the staff who work there and their families. Please consider all the lives that will be affected. Closing Murray will not only be a blow to the handicapped, but it will also handicap those and their families who work there.

Sincerely yours,

(Friend of the family of a Murray resident and Opponent to closing Murray)

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Emma Jean Doling". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name and title.

April 6, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield IL 62706

Name: Arnold and Nancy Blair, Parents/Guardians of Murray Resident

Facility Being Closed: Murray Developmental Center

Our Position: Opposed

Written Statement to be Filed

Dear Commissioners:

As parents/guardians of a 32-year resident, we are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed closing of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. Our son, now 45, has been a resident of Murray since he was 12 years old. Prior to his placement at Murray in 1980, we visited and/or researched various public and private facilities in the state of Illinois. Such well-known facilities as the Kennedy Center responded that they could not adequately serve our son because of his behavioral patterns and the need for round-the-clock supervision. This has not changed.

We have discussed community-placement for Geoffrey many times over the past 32 years; these discussions have included Murray Staff, family members, and numerous other individuals intimately acquainted with our family situation and the needs of Geoff. No one has been convinced that community-placement for Geoff is appropriate, either for him or for us.

At our present stage in life (retired, age 68), we need to know that Geoff will be well-cared for as he continues to age and when we will no longer be around to provide what care we can. Our other two sons (and their families) aren't quipped or knowledgeable about caring for a 45-year old handicapped man and should not have to take him into their homes on a permanent basis;

and the disruption by the introduction of an individual with Geoff's limitations and needs into their homes would be an unreasonable expectation.

We also would like to address the quality of life that Geoff experiences at Murray. Geoffrey is a 45-year old, brain-damaged from lack of oxygen at birth, who functions at the level of a 3-4 year-old. He has minimal speech (maybe 6-8 recognizable words); he is able to make most of his needs known by gestures and a few signs. Over the years, we have seen the happiness that Geoff experiences at Murray; obviously, he feels very secure in his surroundings. The Murray staff we have interacted with have always been honest and encouraging; their caring concern for Geoffrey is evident.

We can relate instances from Geoff's growing up at home which moved us to the difficult decision to place him at Murray: the times when he would leave the house before we knew he was gone and would walk into a neighbor's house; it is very unsettling to have someone just walk in on you (imagine having a 45-year old do that); the times when he would take off on his Big Wheel and the paper boy who knew him and where we lived would bring him home, from 6 blocks away, in the back of his father's pick-up; and other times when Geoff would physically plant himself in the middle of the aisle at the grocery store and refuse to get up, forcing Nancy to leave the full cart for the store employees to put in the cooler until I got home from work and one of us could go complete the shopping. He is still capable of this behavior at 45.

Since settling in at Murray, Geoff has found his "home" and friends. While he is always happy and excited to see us, after an hour or so, it is obvious that the visit is over and he is ready to get back to the TV and his buddies – and to show them a new toy or a new shirt that we have brought to him. Murray is "home"; the other residents are his "family". When we took Geoffrey to Murray in 1980, his first year was an incredibly difficult adjustment period for him; to force such a move on him at this time would be even more traumatic. No one should be forcibly removed from his family and home.

When Geoffrey moved to Murray, we were living in Charleston, Illinois. Due to a job change and other family considerations, we moved to the Chicago area in 1989 (a 5-hour drive from Centralia). As we neared retirement, the decision was made to move to Champaign. One of the factors in that decision was to be nearer to Geoff and Murray.

Finally, we would address the "Rebalancing Initiative for State-Operated Developmental Centers" issued by Governor Quinn and the Illinois Department of Human Services. We have no objection to the issuance of this Initiative; our concern is that facility closures are being

announced and scheduled before the Initiative process has determined that there are viable alternatives to Murray Development Center's current residents. We were always assured, by staff, that DHS (formerly DMHDD) policy was that any move would be to an "equal or better" situation for him. We know of NO such options.

Thank you for considering our thoughts as your deliberations move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Arnold E. Blair".

Arnold E. Blair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nancy L. Blair".

Nancy L. Blair

1811 Cypress Drive

Champaign IL 61821

SHE CANNOT TALK; SHE CANNOT CRY

CAN YOU HEAR HER SCREAM INSIDE:

DO NOT CLOSE MY HOME

DO NOT CLOSE MURRAY CENTER

To: The Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Topic: Opposition to the Closure of Murray Center in Centralia, IL

Order: Please File this Written Statement

Preface: Stefani June Gonzalez

At 5 ½ years of age, Stefani spent six weeks of respite care at Bowen Center in Harrisburg, IL. (I had developed a cardiac arrhythmia caused by stress due to the belligerence of a special education director. With two older children and the 24 hour attention Stefani required we had to make the devastating decision to make Bowen Stefani's home. My health was at risk. (I still live with the arrhythmia.) Governor Thompson decided to close Bowen and provide a youth detention center there. We were moved to Anna Mental Health (now Choate). Stefani was there awhile until they told us she needed to go to Murray Center where because of her profound disabilities she could be best cared for. Murray and Centralia were a godsend; it suited her perfectly, medically and physically. No one can duplicate the quality of care she gets at Murray. She would die sooner than later outside of Murray's care.

Subject: Our Stefani and the Closure of Murray Center

We are the parents of Stefani whose home for more than half her life has been Murray Center. Our daughter is 43 years old. She has Axis II, profound mental retardation, Level IV (functioning 0 to 9 months of age); encephalopathy due to unknown influence; epilepsy, tonic clonic and partial seizures which are poorly controlled; cerebral palsy; moderate spastic quadriplegia; osteoporosis; hypothyroidism; gastrostomy; gastroesophageal reflux disease; bilateral fibrocystic disease of the breast; periodontitis; onychia; onychogryphosis; visually impaired OP-object perception; peripapillary atrophy, bil; old presumed ocular histoplasmosis syndrome with low myopia; chronic constipation. Stefani is routinely and when needed seen by her neurologist via webcam through Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. Stefani is on multi anti-convulsant medications plus many other medications; she needs routine blood tests to monitor these medications. She does not speak. She does not cry. She is wheelchair bound. She cannot do anything for herself; she needs 24 hour total nursing care.

We dare anyone to find more loving, kind, compassionate, more educated caregivers nor a safer environment than she has at Murray. Their understanding of her is unbelievable; it gives us true peace of mind. With their training, Stefani has the best in quality care. She has had multiple ER visits; surgeries; and inpatient stays at St. Mary's Hospital. The availability of physicians and the hospital nearby is of ultimate importance. Stefani always has a caregiver with her whether it's an ER visit or hospital stay. Without her caregivers' acute attentiveness in some cases, she would have courted disaster. She has access to a doctor on staff; a neurologist via webcam at SIU School of Medicine; a dentist; a podiatrist; occupational and physical therapist; hearing and speech pathologist; activity therapist; a dietician; nurses; LPN's; educated caregivers; a foster grandparent, other volunteers, etc. Where outside of Murray in a group home can she get the physical and medical attention she receives today? The answer is nowhere; and if we are told differently, someone has a problem with reality. We have been so grateful all these years that we have always been totally involved in all decisions regarding her care. No one can duplicate the peace of mind we have with Stefani at Murray Center.

Her volunteer foster-grandparent visits her during the week and other volunteers offer their services throughout Murray Center. Many organizations and individuals throughout Centralia and surrounding area support Murray and our Parents Association which has done so many things the state does not provide, such as buying defibrillators; other medical equipment; lounge chairs; TV's; cable; etc. Our raffle in October is always a success and allows us to make life better for our children. The cottages calendars are always full of activities, just like if the residents were at home. Even though Stefani cannot participate, she is present to enjoy what she can. You see the employees create a wonderful home environment.

The closure of Murray Center will be devastating for our Stefani and her friends. Our Stefani would not survive community placement; her problems are too profound; she is too fragile. No one and we mean no one will convince us that she will be better off anywhere else. Murray Center's excellence in the care of our children is not questioned. It's the agenda of special interest groups and politics as usual and oh, yeah, always the money. Sure, some disabled can live in group homes. We have two group homes in our rural county for higher functioning individuals. They go to a workshop south of where we live. And do you know not all communities want a group home in their town. That is a fact. My community is living proof. The savings to the state in closing Murray would be so minimal there would be little effect. The costs in closing Murray and placing residents elsewhere would be staggering because we will demand the same services we are getting today. As Stefani's parents, at 74 and 77 years of age, the closing of Murray scares us to death. We're stunned to have to defend our daughter and her friends' home against such a merciless decision. To say she should be integrated into a community outside of Murray is absurd; she is already integrated in her own little community plus in the whole community of Centralia. Does Murray Center not consist of group homes? Look at it! Has common sense gone so far astray?

Those whose agenda it is to close all mental health facilities and integrate all disabled into a community have had the Governor's ear for too long. We know they have lobbied him and his staff for months, impressing upon him that he would be able to save money on the back of our profoundly disabled children and make business for private corporations. His mantra has been to create jobs and

yet he is killing jobs with this decision. What a joke! Where were our children's needs and our input in this decision? We are the experts. No major decision such as this should be made without discussion from both sides of the issue. According to DHS, Murray Center is an institution. No, it is home for our children. This is 2012. Institutions are of another era. Shame on the governor and DHS. Governor Quinn should be forced to visit Murray himself and spend some time with us and our children. At the end of the day, he would see he has made a most uninformed and ruthless decision; we believe bordering on criminal. Neglect; abuse; imprisonment for some; and deaths will occur to the most fragile. Look at the statistics across the country. Appalling! Just one incident is one too many.

We beg for your compassion and hope you will see in our compelling stories that he should immediately rescind the decision to close Murray Center. Our daughter's life and her friends lives are at stake.

Thank you for your attention, we are,

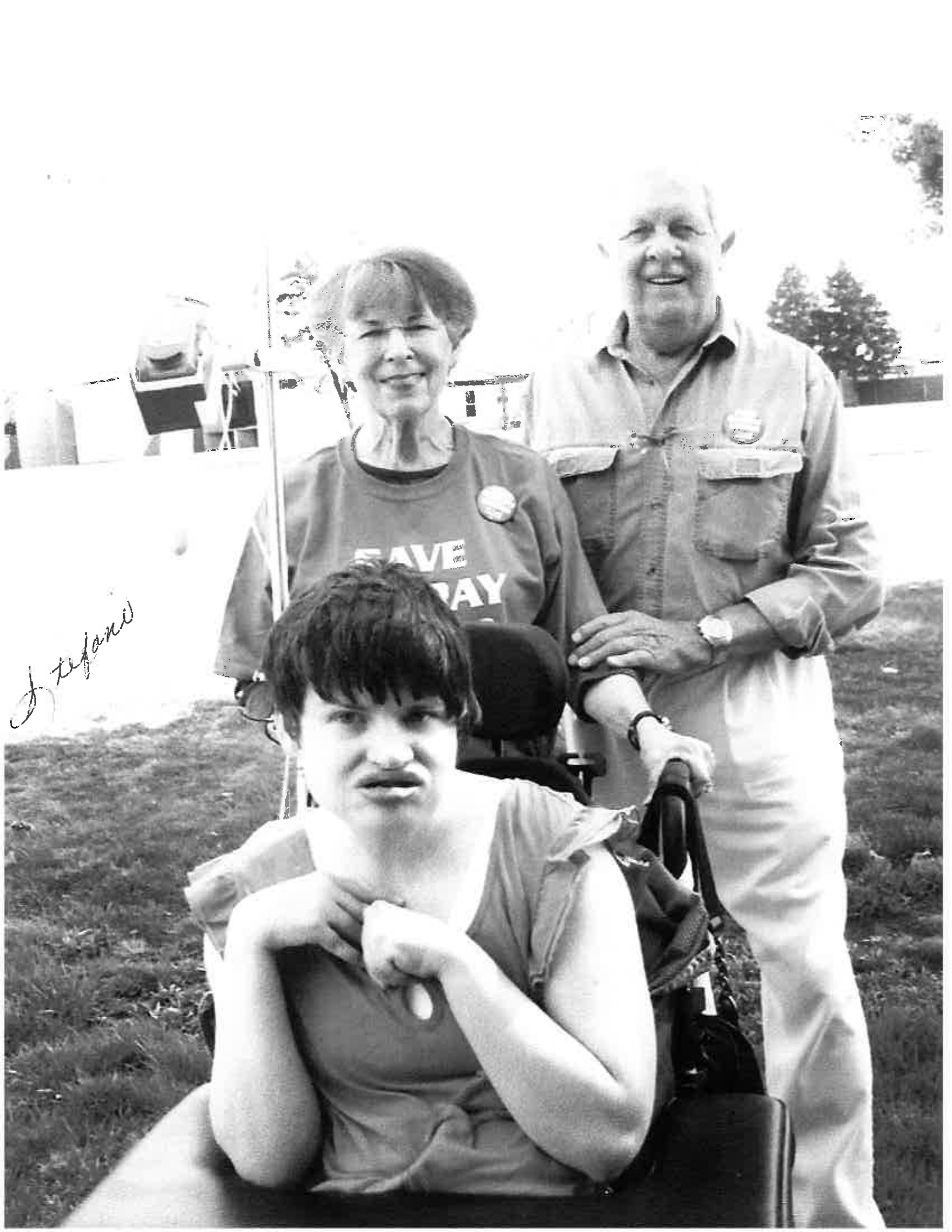
Stefani's parents,

Richard & Melba Gonzalez, PO Box 61, Red Bud, IL 62278

618-282-2858

Addendum: Richard is a retired Illinois State Police Officer of 34+ years on the road. Melba is a retired office manager and medical assistant of 23 years for Internal Medicine doctors.

Richard M. Gonzalez
Melba J. Gonzalez



J. Stefani

Name: Ruth Gebke
Facility Being Closed: Murray Developmental Center
My Position: Opponent
Written Statement

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commission Members:

As a concerned citizen, I am writing to **oppose** the proposed closure of the Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

As a mother and grandmother, I have been blessed with healthy children and grandchildren who can lead normal lives. I am very fortunate, but I know for many mothers, they have a child or grandchild who needs special care due to a medical, physical, emotional, or behavioral reason. As a mother, you love your child whatever the condition and just the same. We all want what is in the best interest of our loved one so they can be happy in an environment that is safe and appropriate for each.

I think it is important for the families to choose where their loved one should live and not by the opinion of the Governor's decision to close a facility. I read the newspapers daily and read the testimonials of families who can vouch they have already tried the community-based facilities that the Governor has mentioned. We cannot sacrifice the safety and wellbeing of these individuals to save a few dollars after it is all said and done. There has to be a well-thought out plan and that will ensure these special people will thrive and their safety is evident. These community-based facilities are not ready and cannot manage the complex medical and behavioral needs of this special population.

Let's leave the decision of going to a community-based facility up to the individual, the guardians, and the caretakers who know the abilities and limitations of each individual and not the Governor's failed plan to send these individuals to facilities that are not obviously ready nor ever will be to provide for the majority of Murray's residents.

Please allow these individuals and their families to return to a normal routine without having to worry where their loved one will be housed. Murray Center is their home and should continue to be. This attempted closure has brought so much stress to the employees and their families. Please allow them to continue providing the best care to these individuals and the ability to provide for their own families.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I pray that you will advocate for these special human beings by keeping Murray Center open.

Sincerely,



Ruth Gebke
14919 Gebke Road
Bartelso, IL 62218

Name: Edwin Gebke
Facility Being Closed: Murray Developmental Center
Your Position: Opponent
Written Statement

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commission Members:

As a concerned citizen, I am writing to **oppose** the proposed closure of the Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois. I am yet to understand why this facility has been slated for closure when neither facts nor plan of action has been given to the people. My only opinion is that this is a political maneuver lead by the Governor's Office. I find this appalling and embarrassing.

1. I am yet to hear what the real reasons are for the closures of this facility. Why is it that 90 percent of the closures listed in Governor Quinn's address were in Southern Illinois and only 10 percent in the Chicago area? What was the criteria and was it followed in establishing who would be slated for closure? Murray Center is one of the top State facilities in Illinois, and there are others who are lacking in many other areas. It is my understanding that Murray Center brought in \$55 million into the General Revenue Fund but only spent about \$42 million last year. Was this considered in deciding which facilities to shut down? The Freedom of Information Act allows for the release of this information of knowing what the reasons were for the proposed closure. Has this information been given to those seeking it, such as State Representative John Cavaletto and to the people of Southern Illinois?
2. These proposed closures would have devastating effects on the economy of this community and also the surrounding communities. The unemployment rate is already at 11.5 percent. We cannot afford to lose another 590 jobs in this area. In addition, this would cause a trickle-down effect, which would affect other areas of employment such as stores, restaurants, car dealerships, churches, schools, etc.
3. Governor Quinn's plan is to integrate the Murray residents into community-based facilities. These types of facilities are not ready nor will be able to meet all of the needs of the Murray residents. I have read so many testimonials of families and have had conversations with families who have already attempted this. Murray Center has become their home. Let's allow these families to choose their home since they know their loved one the best.
4. Who will make the community-based facilities accountable for the services they provide? There must be a standard of care that ensures appropriate care is provided and afforded to these special people. Murray is held accountable, so what is the plan of action for this when the residents are moved to a "people centered" community-based facility? It is important that a plan of action is in place to ensure the residents are safe on an ongoing basis.
5. If the Governor is trying to save money and balance the budget, why was a special team hired and paid \$1 million to look at the individuals at Murray and decide what is best for them? I'm sure there are other "special committees" formed and employed in Chicago and Springfield. Again, what about Southern Illinois? Why is the Governor's Office eliminating these jobs and putting people out of work and risking the safety and wellbeing of the Murray residents?

We all need to advocate for these special residents of Murray by allowing them to remain there. We all want what is in the best interest of these residents and the families know best. Please stop this proposed closure. Thank you.


Edwin Gebke, 14919 Gebke Road, Bartelso, IL 62218

Name: Tanya Loepker
Facility Being Closed: Murray Developmental Center
Your Position: Opponent
The Type of Testimony to be Given: Written Statement Filed

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to **oppose** the closure of the Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

I am writing on behalf of this vulnerable population of special people who currently live at the Murray Development Center. I know local families who have loved ones living there and also know many of the staff employed at Murray Center.

I am an Early Childhood Special Education Teacher. I understand the special care that is needed for this population. It takes caring and trained staff who take the time to learn and understand these individuals' needs whether medical, physical, psychological, or behavioral. When this is established, these individuals can live at their optimal level of independence and self-sufficiency. When staff are not trained and do not take the time to understand each individual's abilities and limitations, we set the individual up to fail.

In any situation, a team approach should be used in deciding what is in the best interest of an individual. The Governor is wanting the individuals placed in "people centered" community-based settings because of cost-saving measures. Is this what is in the best interest of the individual? Shouldn't it be a combined effort of input from those most familiar with the individual? In my professional opinion, the decision to place Murray individuals in a community-based setting should be considered when the individual is ready, the parents and guardians agree, trained Murray staff facilitate the placement, and community-based facilities are ready. These facilities are not ready to handle the complex medical and behavioral-challenged individuals that Murray Center currently serves. When possible and when all of the previous conditions are met, Murray already places those that are capable of successful placement in the community. The Murray staff work hard to act in the best interest of the individuals served.

I am also concerned if this center is closed, what will be the safety net for this special population? Where will families turn when placement in the community fails? Is the State's solution to send the individuals far away from their families in other State facilities that will eventually be slated for closure, too? Who will monitor the community-based facilities for appropriate standards of care? It is my understanding that SODCs are heavily scrutinized with unannounced visits from Illinois Department of Public Health, Department of Justice, and various advocacy groups such as Equip for Equality and ARC. Will these same groups be monitoring the CILAs and other group homes to ensure this vulnerable population's care is continually monitored?

I feel the Governor's plan is premature and not well thought through. There are too many unanswered questions. I hope this is not a political battle, playing with the lives of this vulnerable population. These individuals are human beings who deserve the chance to live in an environment that is safe and where they are happy. Please stop this closure, and allow these individuals to continue calling Murray Center their home. The families of the individuals and the employees need to return to taking care of them and their own families and not have to worry about this threatened closure. This has caused so much senseless stress for everyone involved!

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely, Tanya Loepker (14795 Gebke Road, Bartelso, IL 62218)



APRIL 8 2012

GOVERNOR PAT QUINN
207 STATE HOUSE
SPRINGFIELD IL 62708

DEAR GOVERNOR QUINN,

IN 1972, WHEN MY SON, LANCE'S SEVERE HEADACHES
WERE RELIEVED BY CRANIAL SURGERY @ NORTHWESTERN
HOSPITAL, PARALYSIS DEVELOPED IN HIS LEFT ARM
AND LEG; AND SPEECH WAS IMPAIRED.
CONSULTATION WITH TRISHOLDS, CHGO, ADMITTED HIM
TO ST JOSEPH HOSPITAL, THEN TO ELGIN STATE HOSPITAL;
EVENTUALLY TO ST FRANCIS HOSPITAL JOLIET - ALL UNSUITABLE
FOR PROPER CARE OF HIS CONDITION.

THROUGH HELP OF A STATE OF ILLINOIS CASEWORKER,
LANCE BECAME A "BOBART RECIPIENT" AND WAS
ASSIGNED TO MURRAY BY JUDGE STEVENS, AS
BEING "THE BEST FACILITY IN ILLINOIS." LANCE
WAS ADMITTED TO APPLE COTTAGE IN 1996.
WHAT A BLESSING!!!

MURRAY'S STAFF HAS PROVEN THE MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE
AND CARING IMAGINABLE. THIS, HIS CONDITION HAS,
WITH MEDICATION, NOW STABILIZED, UNDER THEIR CARE.

IN MY OPINION, IT WOULD BE, INDEED, A SIN
TO CLOSE SUCH A REMARKABLE, RECIPIENT
ORIENTED FACILITY.

PLEASE SAVE MURRAY!

SINCERELY,

LITTLE BLUE HAND
(EASTERN CHEROKEE DECENT)

AKA ROBERT L. DICKENS, LANCE'S FATHER
714 LINDEN AVENUE
OAK PARK, IL 60302-1566
708-848-1188

CC TO GF&A COMMISSION & OTHER ILLINOIS
STATE REPRESENTATIVES - AND RITA WINKLER
PRESIDENT MURRAY PARENTS ASSOC.



LITTLE BLUE HAND

PORTRAITS & SCENES OF ADVENTURE

STUDIO & GALLERY AT 88 ELK RIDGE RD., LIVINGSTON, MT 59047
(406) 222-7148

DEAR COMMISSIONERS,

I WOULD LIKE TO REGISTER MY OPPOSITION TO THE CLOSING OF
MURRAY CENTER.

My name is Debra Benjamin and I have worked at Murray Center for 31 years. I spent many years working as a Mental Health Technician and Physical Therapy Aid. I currently hold the position of Mental Health Administrator, and my responsibilities include serving as the director of the Vocational Program. Our on campus Vocational Program provides services for individuals who for various reasons, can not or will not attend the local community workshop.

We currently have 86 individuals enrolled in our program. The curriculum we follow has been established by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The funding we receive also is from ISBE. The specific curriculum areas that we allowed to train on is based on potential jobs that our individuals could hope to find in our area. As you can imagine in a small town in Southern Illinois our opportunities are limited. We operate on the assumption that everyone is employable, and we know that sometimes there are many steps that must be accomplished before this can happen.

The skills the individuals in our program possess vary widely. Skills sets range from learning simple workplace skills, like matching objects or choosing appropriate attire for weather conditions, or simply learning to respond when your name is called, to more advanced skills possessed by individuals that are capable of sweeping and mopping floors, but need to learn to accept instructions and follow directions without becoming so upset that they strike out at some one.

We have programs that teach people how to write checks, and some people work on learning how to answer a phone or work on the computer. We teach many things in anticipation that these students/trainees will eventually get a job or at the very least will be prepared to attend the community workshop. Every individual in our program has unique needs and assets. On any given day, we have 3 or 4 extra individuals to provide services for because those people did not get on the bus to the workshop or perhaps they acted out on the bus after boarding and were removed by workshop staff. The staff that work in our classrooms are the same staff that also works on the cottages.

I worry about what will happen to these individuals. I know in the past CILAs would not accept individuals who couldn't attend a workshop. These individuals are very proud of their achievements. They work very hard, and sometimes they do progress to the workshop, sometimes the adjustment is just too hard and they return to the vocational program. When that happens we just start again working on the skills that they need to succeed. As you might imagine, these people with limited cognitive skills usually learn best by repetition and consistency. Please take these points into consideration when making your recommendation.

Thank you for your time.

Debra Benjamin
108 E. 16th
Centralia IL 62801
618-918-3470

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

Put me down as an opponent for closing Murray Center. My brother, Mark Bridges, is a resident there. He is autistic and very handicapped. His behaviors are extreme. He is a danger to himself and others and requires 24 hr. care.

My brother is well cared for at Murray. Although he likes to see family members, he is always happy to go back to his activities at Murray. Since he is autistic, he likes everything to be the same. Murray provides the structured environment Mark must have.

Murray does not want to over medicate their residents. However, my brother must have medication for his behaviors. Murray keeps a close watch on Mark's medications to see that he gets the correct meds and correct amount of each med. His meds can have side effects, and they watch closely for this as well.

Please support keeping Murray open.

Opponent to closing Murray,
(and brother of resident, Mark Bridges)

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Eric H. Bridges".

April 2nd, 2012

To Whom It Concerns:

I am an "opponent" of closing
W. H. Murray Developmental Center
in Centralia, IL.

I am begging you NOT to shut
down my son's home (away from me).
My son Carver Anthony Pace is 31.

I managed to be able to keep him
home until almost 21 yrs old.

He was diagnosed with Autism at
age 4 1/2 and told me he would
probably never talk.

I did everything in my power to
make sure he did. He does!

He loves singing and he is social
with mostly adults.

At age 25, the reason I had to put
him into Murray Center was because
he was getting aggressive on an
extremely high & harsh level.

He would cry the whole time saying
he had to stop, but could not.
You cannot believe how very devast-
ating it was for me to have to try
to find placement.

It takes 3 & 4 adults holding him
down when he gets aggressive.

His dad & I searched place after
place. We tried a group home; it
was a disaster. They called us &
~~Region I~~ & the TARC People

②

In Wood River, Ill. & they asked us to pick him up & that was only 20 hours later.

They did not have enough staff members to hold him down.

He was very agitated & shaking. We tried other placement places, not a one suited. Carmen Anthony or us.

Finally we found W.G. Murray Center. What a blessing it has been.

When Carmen Anthony first went there in 2001, he was having many aggressions, 15 to 20 a month where he had to be held down & half of that he had to be placed in 05 point restraints.

Now; almost 11 years later, he has NO 5 pt restraints & has only had 2 aggressions, (last year) in total where he had to be restrained. We cannot handle change. At all's

Even when staff changes he has a very hard time and it takes him weeks to get back on track.

W.G. Murray Center is 1 hour drive from where I live; but we can bring him home every 2 to 3 weeks & keep him over night, so he is home about 24 hours.

③

I could not keep him alone by myself, but his Dad has very good control of him, & so it works for us.

I still cry everytime he has to go back; but at least I know he is going to a great place that he himself likes; we know because we ask them often.

When he starts getting his nervous agitation (out of nowhere as he does), he often has asked to "go back" because he feels controlled there.

Please, I cannot write down everything about him & why he needs to be there. He really likes the staff & they really like him. To still all over again would be horrible.

Please, Please DO NOT close
W.C. Murray Developmental Center.

Mrs. Jo Angela Pace
27 Duplex Ct.
Collinsville, IL 62234

(618) 789-4930.

E-mail: joangela_pace@yahoo.com

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

How can Governor Quinn even consider closing Murray Center in Centralia?

I am a friend of the Bridges family who have a son, Mark Bridges, who is a resident there. It was such a blessing for him and the family to have a place like Murray.

It is hard to believe that the Governor would consider cutting spending by starting out closing places like Murray which cares for individuals who have severe developmental disabilities, complex health needs, and challenging behaviors.

Opponent for closing Murray Center,

Melinda Cheek

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

How can Governor Quinn even consider closing Murray Center in Centralia?

I am a friend of the Bridges family who have a son, Mark Bridges, who is a resident there. It was such a blessing for him and the family to have a place like Murray.


It is hard to believe that the Governor would consider cutting spending by starting out closing places like Murray which cares for individuals who have severe developmental disabilities, complex health needs, and challenging behaviors.

Opponent for closing Murray Center,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Dan Chubb". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.



Association of Illinois
Electric Cooperatives

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner 

N. Duane Noland
President / CEO

April 12, 2012

To Members of the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability:

I am writing to seek your commission's recommendation that the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center remain open. As a former Member of the Illinois General Assembly, I have had the opportunity to visit our states' facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities in Decatur, Springfield, Jacksonville and Centralia.

The Murray Center has many residents with severe developmental disabilities that make it impractical to provide care at home or in a smaller group home. I am personally acquainted with two residents from the Decatur area who have complex health needs and challenging behavior. They require the vital support services and medical care from the trained staff at the Murray Center.

As an advocate of community agencies, I have always supported their mission and requests for state appropriations. However, many Murray residents have previously tried local placements that were not suited for their complex health needs and were eventually returned to the Murray Center.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter and concern for the residents and families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Duane Noland".

N. Duane Noland

Testimony of Tamar Heller, Ph.D.

Illinois Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

April 17, 2012

Members of the Commission, I am pleased to have this opportunity to provide written testimony on services for people with developmental disabilities in Illinois. My name is Tamar Heller. I am the Director of the Institute on Disability and Human Development (IDHD), the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities for the State of Illinois. For the past thirty years I have researched the impact of residential settings and services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. I also have a sister with developmental disabilities who once resided in an institutional setting (a nursing home) and is now happily living in a community residence.

As a researcher I would like to provide some up to date testimony on what the research tells us about the impact of institutional closures and transfers to the community for people with developmental disabilities. As a family member I would like to provide a personal account of my sister's experience moving out of the nursing home into a home in the community.

Outcomes of Closures and Deinstitutionalization

Numerous studies and reviews of the outcomes of closures and deinstitutionalization in several countries report the following outcomes regarding quality of life, adaptive behaviors, and health of residents and satisfaction of families:

- 1) Improved quality of life, including more choice-making opportunities, more friends, greater community participation, and greater residential satisfaction.ⁱ
- 2) Improved adaptive behaviors, including social skills, self-care, and domestic skills and inconsistent results regarding challenging behaviors.ⁱⁱ
- 3) Similar or improved health status and health care access, with some difficulty in accessing some types of health care such as dental services, and less polypharmacy.^{iii i}
- 4) Greater satisfaction of families with community placement versus the previous institutions, despite the fact that many families initially opposed deinstitutionalization^{1,iv}

Cost Savings of Closures

Generally community living is less costly to state government than community placements. Several recent reports from other states have indicated significant cost savings, including

estimated savings of about 40% in Massachusetts^{iv} and 50% in Kansas^{vi}. Other studies have reported savings closer to 25%.^{vii}

While over time there are considerable cost savings of closing institutions, these savings do not usually occur until the institution is entirely closed. During the transition the costs can remain high as there is still a need to maintain the facility and most of the staff. Cost savings from deinstitutionalization are achieved primarily through the elimination/reduction of the high costs of operating a large state operated developmental center, leveraging less costly community services (social, educational, recreational), and avoiding the high costs of remodeling older institutions to meet federal standards.

In Illinois the new "State of the States in Developmental Disabilities 2011,"^{viii} the average daily spending per person in state institutions was \$498 or \$181,770 per year for 2009, The average CILA cost is \$52,454 according to the Division of Developmental Disabilities, March/2011.

Results from the Closures of Howe and Lincoln

Of the 363 persons who moved from Lincoln after the closure announcement, the majority moved to SODCs. Six years after closure, most people remained in the setting that they moved to and 15% died. Most of the deaths occurred in the SODCs, though the highest mortality rate (75%) was for those residents who moved to nursing homes^{ix}.

Following the Howe closure, surveys and interviews with families/guardians and the residents themselves, indicated that while many were dissatisfied with the decision to close Howe, attitudes were more positive after the closure. Residents who moved to CILAs were generally happy with their placements and wanted to remain in the community settings, while residents who moved to SODCs often expressed their desire to live in the community^x.

Personal Comments

Often opponents of closure of institutional settings note that their relative is too severely disabled to live in a community setting. My sister is an example of someone with high support needs who is thriving in her home where she lives with a few other residents. Prior to moving into the home, she was obese, had diabetes necessitating four shots per day, had frequent angry outbursts, was non-ambulatory, and had to be transferred from her bed to the toilet using a hoist. Within one year after leaving the nursing home she lost 60 pounds, no longer had diabetes, and no longer had to take insulin. She is involved in day activities in a local program, is generally cheerful, and reports being "very happy." My parents, who are in their 80's say that the good news from my sister has given them a new lease on life.

References

- ⁱ Kozma, A., Mansell, J., and Beadle-Brown, J. (2009) Outcomes in Different Residential Settings for People With Intellectual Disability: A Systematic Review. *American Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* 114(3) 193–222.
- ⁱⁱ Lakin, K.C., Larson Kim, S.A., and Kim, S., (2011). Behavioral Outcomes of Deinstitutionalization for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: A Review of Studies Conducted Between 1977- and 2010. *Policy Research Brief*, April 2011, Vol.2, No. 2, pp. 1-12.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Hayden, M., Kim, S.H., and DePaepe, P. (2005) Health Status, Utilization Patterns, and Outcomes of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities: Review of the Literature. *Mental Retardation*: June 2005, Vol. 43, No. 3, pp. 175-195.
- ^{iv} Larson, A. and Lakin, C. (1991), Parental Attitudes about Residential Placement before and after Deinstitutionalization: A Research Synthesis. *JASH*, 25-38.
- ^v Massachusetts Executive Office of Administration and Finance (2010). Report to the Legislature on DDS's Community Expansion and Facility Consolidation Plan.
- ^{vi} Kansas Facilities Closure and Realignment Commission (2009). Facilities Closure and Realignment Commission Meeting Discussion on Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Kansas Neurological Institute and Parsons State Hospital October 26, 2009 Topeka, Kansas
- ^{vii} Stancliffe, R.J. and Lakin, C. (2004). Costs and Outcomes of Community Services for Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. *Policy Research Brief* 14(1). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Research and Training Center on Community Living.
- ^{viii} Braddock, D., Hemp, R., Rizzolo, M.C., Haffer, L., Tanis, E.S., & Wu, J. (2011). The State of the States in Developmental Disabilities: Washington, DC: American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.
- ^{ix} Norris, A., Rizzolo, M. , & Heller, T. (2012) The Closure of the Lincoln Developmental Center: An Analysis of Outcomes. Chicago: Institute on Disability and Human Development, University of Illinois at Chicago.
- ^x Sorenson, A., Rizzolo, M., Norris, A., & Heller, T. (2012). An Evaluation of the Howe Developmental Center Closure: Chicago: Institute on Disability and Human Development, University of Illinois at Chicago.

To Whom It May Concern,

4-15-12

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of my brother, Richard Lewkowski. He has been a resident of the Murray Center since he was 12 years old. My brother Ricky has a severe form of mental retardation due to Phenylketonuria or PKU. He cannot care for himself and he cannot speak. What you would find if you visited the Murray Center is a very clean and well run facility. It is a place where the staff takes excellent and loving care of the residents. Ricky, like many of the other residents requires constant care. If he were to be taken away from this exceptional environment; from the place that he has been able to call his home for many years it could be absolutely disastrous to his well-being. I ask that you reconsider your recent decision to close the Murray Center.

Sincerely,

Kim Morkes, Sister of Richard Lewkowski; 48 year Murray Center Resident

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

703 Stratton Building

Springfield Illinois 62706

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Mazell Brown. My son Irvin Brown is currently living in the Murray Development Center. It is with great concern that I plead with you to not take away the safe haven and home from these residents. This facility provides excellent care and a dedicated staff who treat these residents with severe development disabilities, complex health needs and challenging behavior issues. My son has very high needs and requires the 24 hour safety provided by Murray. The Murray staff understands my sons needs and understands him as if he were family.

Commissioners, as a working mother who needs to work to support my son and his needs, I plead with you to not close Murray Center. It has become his home away from home. The loss of Murray will have a serious impact on the residents, staff and the working parents who depend on it to treat their loved ones.

Thank you very much for your consideration,

Mazell Brown

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mazell Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'M'.

April 2012.

To: The Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (CoGFA)
Members and The Governor of Illinois :

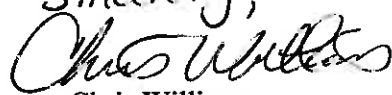
To begin, I am writing this letter for those who have no way to voice their opinion(s) and concerns during these past several months. This is for those who depend upon caregivers and the Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. They have so many employees, caregivers, volunteers, doctors, nurses, physical therapists, the staff center director, and many more, who help these residents have an easier life from day to day. This letter is being wrote for All the Residents of Murray's Center and to Save their only home.

There is so much which has been said over the past several months. Yes, there are many statistics which speak about what kind of facility Murray's Center is. It is up to state code and is very clean, there is room for I believe between 90-99 more residents in the cottages. This center actually does bring in a lot of money for the local economy and for the state. There are so many loyal and dedicated employees, who have chosen this as their career, so that they can continue to care for these individuals.

The residents and employees are so much like a family to each other. Murray Center is a type of community, which many individuals and families make up. This particular community was and is based on a trust from the state, that they will always be cared for as human beings, as individuals. This same trust should never be questioned by any one. "Loving," "cared for," "Honesty," and "Respect" are characteristics which creates the base of any community, or a "common" "unity."

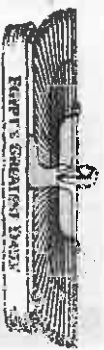
All that the residents are asking is that you do not take them from the only home, which they have lived in. They all love where they are at, and they all give back so much with their friendly smiles.

In my opinion, this is not an issue about the money which the state has or does not have, or what political party or region of the state that you live in. This is an issue for what is right -- for human dignity, and the right decision which should be made for these residents! I thank you for taking the time to read this letter! Thank-you again.

Thank you and with Best Regards,
Sincerely,

Chris Williams.
(618) 339-8560.



SUNDAY Sentinel



149TH YEAR - VOL. CXLIX No. 36

SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 2012

AN EDITION OF THE SENTINEL - Daily 50¢ Sunday \$1.25

Closure would cut \$22.8M to area

Study indicates that closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center would eliminate nearly \$23 million in economic activity in Southern Illinois

BY MATT BARBA
SENTEINEL NEWS STAFF

CENTRALIA — For weeks members of the Murray Center Coalition have been arguing that Gov. Pat Quinn's proposal to close the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center will have a detrimental impact on the area, and a study recently conducted by Northern Illinois University indicates the

facility's closure will result in a loss of \$22.8 million in economic activity to the region.

Last month the Regional Development Institute completed an economic impact study of the Murray Center's closure and how it will affect the greater Centralia area, as well as what kind of impact it will have on Southern Illinois and the entire state.

The study looked at both direct and indirect impacts from the facility's closure, with direct impacts including those from Murray Center's annual operations, including employee compensation, output and taxes, and indirect impacts including secondary effects on the area.

Currently the Murray Center employs about 550 full- and part-time employees in the Clinton, Jefferson, Marion and Washington County region earning \$23.7 million in wages annually.

Jeanne Gustafson, Centralia's economic development director, said the loss of so many jobs would not only hurt Centralia, but is also

the opposite of what the state is trying to do in terms of improving its economy.

As much as the State of Illinois is trying to create jobs, to take a community and eliminate a major employer like the Murray Center is just as devastating as a major manufacturing firm leaving the state," said Gustafson.

She added, "The state has been going out of their way to prevent companies from leaving but to close down the Murray Center would have the same effect on this entire region."

Murray Centers average annual employee compensation for the rehabilitation center is estimated

at approximately \$68,273, including wages and fringe benefits. The NTU report states the "loss of economic activity as a result of the proposed closure will decrease local sales tax by \$173,000 annually."

It is estimated the loss to state and local taxes will be even greater with that amount totaling \$413,000 annually.

Authors of the report also state in it that "the closure of the Murray Center will result in a loss of \$22.8 million in direct and indirect economic activity in the region annually, including \$3.6 million in Direct Output.
Please see **Closure**, Page 3A

Heart Walk

PAWPERING FOR A GOOD CAUSE

U.S. Army

Not only would this cause a lot of the population down here to move to another state, These residents health is At Risk, and many of these residents could not even survive, leaving and moving some place else.

To: The Honorable Governor Pat Quinn
From: Lauren Branon
Date: March 15, 2012
Subject: Murray Center

Dear Honorable Governor Quinn, I am asking you to please reconsider closing Murray Center. I am sure you have heard this countless times but there is not one resident here in Centralia that would not be affected by the closing of Murray Center. People all around us, family, neighbors, best friends, and students will all be hurt. There are many students at Central City who will have to relocate due to their family's unemployment if you choose to close Murray Center down. One of those students being affected is my best friend. Her parents would have to move and take her with them. She would be taken away from all of us and that would really hurt me and the rest of her friends.

Another person whom I know this will affect is one of my favorite teachers Mrs. Aimee. She is married to the Chief of Police here in Centralia. Her husband has a brother and his name is Andi. Andi lives at Murray Center. When he was a baby he got a high fever that caused him to have severe brain damage. He can't feed himself, nor can you turn your back on him for a second without him doing something that could be hazardous to him. What will Andi do if you close Murray Center? Where will he go? Will the people there watch him and take care of him the same way that the people of Murray Center do? What will Mrs. Aimee and her family do? Mrs. Aimee is like a mother to him. It will break her heart to be so far from Andi. She doesn't want him to go away, so she might have to quit her job and stay home and try to take care of him the best that she can. We won't have her as a teacher anymore. That would really hurt all of us here at Central City.

My Grandma is another person this would affect. What happens if you close it down? I don't want my grandma to leave me; neither do any of the other people who will be losing the people that they love and that mean so much in their lives.

If you would, I would like you to take a moment and think about what a home and family means to you personally. A home is very important and dear to all of us. It's where you live and laugh every day. Home is where you go after a stressful day to get peace of mind. Home is where you always feel safe. And for the people who live at Murray Center, that is their home. And, that is their family as well. We all know that a family is made up of people who care about you. They always want what is best for you. They want to keep you safe. They want to make you feel loved. Now that you are thinking of what a home and family feels like to you, please understand that Murray Center feels like home to everyone who lives there. They feel safe and cared for and they love the people who work with them. Warren G. Murray Center and its faculty are home and family to these people.

Governor Quinn, I say this not to disrespect you in any way, but I just don't understand how you can take this home away from so many people. This decision will affect so many families and so many lives. Please reconsider your decision. I ask that you please take some time and visit Murray Center and examine for yourself the great things that its faculty does for those people whose lives depend on the love and care that the workers of Murray Center provide each and every day.

Finally, I hope not all of this is just about money because that would make me sad. When I hear about all the things that are going wrong in our state, It just seems like the people and the towns our part of Illinois get ignored. My mom and dad are always telling me that there is more to life than just having money. They tell me that it is important to help people who can't help themselves. So, I really hope Governor Quinn that you reconsider closing Murray Center because everyone here needs your help too.

Sincerely,

Lauren Branon



The Institute on Public Policy for People with Disabilities
683 South Prospect Avenue
Elmhurst, Illinois 60126
cathyfickerterrill@yahoo.com

To: The Members of the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

From: Cathy Ficker Terrill, Institute on Public Policy for People with Disabilities

Re: Closure of the Murray Developmental Center

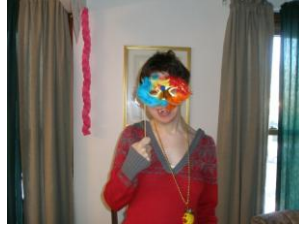
Date: April 13, 2012

The Institute on Public Policy commends the Governor and his team of dedicated staff for their vision to rebalance the Illinois system for people with disabilities. For too long scarce government resources have been unfairly distributed across the state. For too long decisions about services have been based upon antiquated models of care that date back to 1894. In fact, 10 years after the first state operated institution opened, its creator, Samuel Howe stated, that he had made a tragic mistake. That pulling people from their communities to an isolated location was not in the best interest of the person.

The Governor has put forth a clear proposal that would allow independent evaluations of the individuals with disabilities living at Murray. Each person will have a comprehensive individual support plan developed which takes into account the best interest of the individual. The plan will be proactive and the Governor has committed the resources so that each person will be able to have supports based upon their needs.

The state is not taking things away from individuals, but rather using best practices and evidenced based information to reconfigure antiquated models of care to transition the residents of Illinois living at Murray to give them an opportunity for a life filled with hope with the creative supports needed to be successful.

Many people are fearful that individuals may be harmed by leaving the shelter of a large building on a campus far away from others. The reality is that thousands of people have left state institutions throughout this nation and are thriving. They are not only doing well, they are doing great. The easiest way for me to explain this is to share some stories. I have hundreds of these stories. I will only share a few this evening.



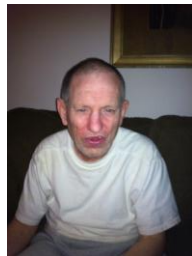
Laura moved from the Howe state institution in 2007, where she had lived for nearly 25 years. Because she had resided in an institution for most of her adult life, it was not an easy transition for Laura to move into a home. However, Laura had a full team of professionals and direct support staff working with her to make sure that she would be successful. Today Laura is cheerful, fun-loving and adventuresome. She loves living in Naperville and exploring the community around her, including regularly volunteering for Meals on Wheels and taking advantage of the many parks and resources her community has to offer. Laura's connection and involvement with her family has strengthened during the past few years, and she now attends and actively participates in family celebrations and important events.



Michael is another former state institution resident who is thriving in his new home. Michael moved to a CILA after having lived for nearly 20 years at the oldest state institution in the country (opened in 1879). Michael's family wanted him to move closer to them and to be able to experience a better quality of life than what the institution offered. Michael and his family visited several homes where Michael could live, so that they could choose what they thought would be the best fit for him. Through the individualized planning process, Michael and his family were able to let staff know what he liked, disliked and things he wanted to do now that he lived in a community. Michael and his roommates lead an active life, including attending sporting events, concerts and shopping. Michael's family is regular visitors and he's able to spend more time with them now that he's not a 2 hour drive away. Michael's father couldn't be happier with his progress: "I think he's doing well at his new home. He didn't have the liberty or the social involvement when he was living at Shapiro that he has now. The staff is also teaching him to be more independent!"



Angel lived in state institutions from the time he was 5 until finally moving into his own “home” 3 years ago. One of the excuses for Angel living in an institution was that his uncontrolled seizure activity required continuous nursing presence. With support and determination from the staff at Ray Graham Association, Angel’s medications have been adjusted with great success. While he requires continuous close monitoring, Angel’s condition doesn’t require him to live in a segregated institution. Now Angel fully participates in the life of the community, including attending a Community Learning Center during the week, volunteering, participating in activities at his home and going out with friends on the weekend. Staff became aware of Angel’s interest in animals, and have created numerous, ongoing opportunities for him to interact with a variety of different animals, including pet therapy, visiting the horses and barn area at a Ray Graham program site, and visiting pet stores near his home.



Billy had lived in state institutions since 1959, until finally moving to a CILA home less than a year ago. Billy and his family visited his home several times before moving, to make it a smooth and comfortable transition. Billy was able to get to know his housemates and staff and was excited when he got to join them permanently. Being close to his family was a priority for Billy and his family. Billy’s family expressed surprise that they could visit with him so freely and that he could join them at important family events; his mother reported that staff at the institution had discouraged them from visiting with Billy and establishing a meaningful relationship with him. The family experienced their first Holiday Party this year, and was thrilled to see so many other families present and see how happy their son was with his new friends. A treasured memory of this event for both Billy and his family is the picture staff took of them in front of the Christmas tree – the first family photo they had with their son.



Harlan was a resident of the Howe institution for nearly 25 years before moving to a CILA home. Harlan immediately began to blossom and expressed his happiness with his new home, staff, friends and opportunities. Harlan enjoys going to concerts, playing sports, going out to dinner, bowling and visiting the zoo. Harlan is happy to have the responsibilities of living in home, and enjoys helping with cooking, chores and deciding how he spends his free time. Most importantly Harlan feels safe in his new home and is enjoying life day by day!



Rick also moved to a CILA home from the oldest state institution in the country, where he had lived for many years. Rick's father was seeking alternative placements for Rick because he felt that there were better options for Rick to live in other than a state institution. Rick and his father are both very happy with the decision to have Rick move into a CILA home. Rick's dad has stated on several occasions that Rick is so much happier living in his new home than when he lived at the institution. Rick has been able to pursue more of his personal interests since moving, including playing and listening to music and attending concerts. Rick plays the keyboard and has performed at holiday parties.



Terry used to live at Shapiro Developmental Center in Kankakee. He has a diagnosis of developmental disability and mental illness and moved to a Marcfirst CILA in 2003. After receiving supports with medical services in the community, it was learned that Terry actually has a seizure disorder that affects his temporal lobe, which can have a strong effect on personality. Terry now takes medication for seizures and has been stable for many years.

Terry also had the opportunity to move from a 5 bedroom CILA to a 2 bedroom apartment in 2008. He still receives 24 hour supports and is participating in job development services. When asked what he would like to say about Shapiro Center, Terry stated, "I'm so glad to be away from Shapiro! I have my freedom here, 'ya know. I can go out and do things like Best Buddies because people trust me." I asked Terry what he meant when he said people trusted him. He said that he remembers at Shapiro it was like a prison and you could never leave the "grounds" except for special occasions.

There have been many ups and downs with supporting Terry in the community, but it has been great to see him grow and become part of his community over the last 9 years. He just celebrated his 64th birthday and is now looking forward to retirement...and maybe learning to golf!



A success stories from the perspective of a family member

Jeanette is my sister. We were like many other sisters growing up. We played, we fought, we enjoyed family events, and we enjoyed our music. I favored the Beatles while Jeanette was especially fond of Elvis and Tom Jones.

She was born with a developmental disability; my parents were very protective of Jeanette and kept her on the family farm. As we grew into young adults, I would eventually leave to start a new life. Jeanette would remain at home where my father was committed to taking care of her. Eventually taking care of my sister became too much and in 1993, my father reluctantly moved Jeanette to the Shapiro Developmental Center.

Living in a state institution was hard for Jeanette. Although I would visit her often, Jeanette was obviously a changed person. Gone was her smile. She had lost weight. When I had to leave she would plead "No! No!". I would later discover that she was often kept locked in her room. If she didn't eat her supper at the right time it would be thrown out. If she did not behave in a certain way more medication was prescribed. This was no life for my sister. I knew that someday, somehow, I had to get her out of there.

Things began to change when I was fortunate to start a new job at Futures Unlimited. I quickly learned how the staff at Futures is dedicated to helping Livingston County citizens like Jeanette

enjoy a life of dignity and respect in their community. I realized that with their help, I could bring Jeanette back home where she belongs.

In 2004, Jeanette moved into a Futures' group home where she has direct care staff to assist her. The staff at the state institution told us it would never work and that Jeanette would be a failure in the community. Wow, has Jeanette proved them wrong! She now goes to the movies, goes bowling, and often laughs and jokes with the children in her neighborhood. She enjoys music and dancing, shopping, and ice cream at DQ.

And, oh yes, she has her smile back.

Richard

Richard used to live at Shapiro Developmental Center and later moved to an ICF/DD facility. Both of his parents passed away and he was an only child. Richard was referred to a CILA where seven other people lived. He was referred due to significant episodes of physical aggression. After 10 years of living in the two flat CILA in Chicago, Richard had an opportunity to visit and spend some time at a smaller, 3 person CILA in suburbs of Chicago. He decided to reside at that home. Now Richard is 49 years old man and is enjoying his new home. Daily he calls Para-transit to arrange his transportation to his day program and throughout the community. Richard has re-united with his faith by attending synagogue with his housemates and has shocked everyone by reading Hebrew and led a service at his temple. Now Richard goes to the bank, grocery stores, movies, and restaurants by himself without any behavioral issues. He has a diagnosis of mental retardation, cerebral palsy and intermittent explosive disorder.

These testimonials reflect success in the lives of many who have transitioned from a state operated residential facility to a home in a local community with supports. Person centered planning with creative individual supports equals success. The Institute on Public Policy for People with Disabilities supports the transition of people from Murray Center to community options.

Sincerely,

Cathy Ficker Terrill

Cathy Ficker Terrill, CEO

April 11, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Dear Commission Panel:

Please keep Murray Center open. I am a friend of the Bridges family who have an autistic son, Mark Bridges, who resides there.

I know Murray provides vital and irreplaceable services for Mark as well as the other residents. If I had a severely handicapped child, I would hope they could receive the excellent care the Center provides.

Please don't close the center. It gives these severely handicapped individuals the best quality of life and personal care that they can get.

Sincerely yours,
(Opponent to closing Murray)

Janet Poling
Phil Poling

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amanda McCullough, teacher". The signature is written in a cursive style.

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Mitchell Albers

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Dylan Lampe

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Jadyn M. Wuebbels

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "James H. Hargrave". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Shelby Wesselmann

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Nick Immermann". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style. The first name "Nick" is smaller and more compact, while the last name "Immermann" is larger and more spread out, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Trevor Wessemann

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Kaylee Albers

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Parker Johnson". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,


3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erica N. Schomaker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

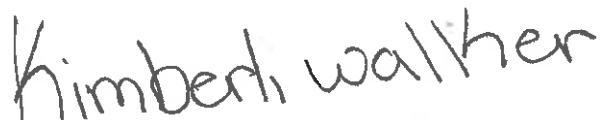
Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Kimbberly Walther". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ethan Stratton". The ink is dark and the signature is written in a fluid, connected style.

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chloe Boop".

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

April 25, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Murray Center

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing from Germantown Elementary to express our support to Save Murray Center from closing. The people that live at Murray Center are our neighbors and we want them to stay in our community. Each and every one of us also have family members and friends that work with the residents at Murray Center and understand how bad this will be on our local area if we were to leave these jobs.

We ask that you please keep these residents in their home and these jobs in our community.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gavyn Followell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

3rd Grade Students
Germantown Elementary School
401 Walnut Street
Germantown, IL 62245

MURRAY MATTERS

To: COGFA Members - written/oral testimony
From: Melissa Cavitt - CTRS/Activity Therapy/Volunteer Services - Public Service Administrator,
34 year employee

Thank you for allowing me to speak...

Are you aware that Murray Center has been involving our people in community integration since the 60s? I personally witnessed this as a high school volunteer in 1968 taking our people to the community swimming pool and we are still doing so today.

**Community integration is NOT our goal,
it is who we are!**

My responsibility is transitioning our people into a typical community venue of their choice. Remember we are family - that means we individualize!

For example, Mike likes to swim, Jane likes the movies, and Mary likes to shop.

Do you realize that we have 275 people living at Murray Center?

Are you aware that we have 275 individualized programs?

That means we teach skills so our people can visit places in the community they CHOOSE, with the least amount of supports possible.

Our staff is responsible for nurturing independence. The CRA 5 star quality citizen model has ALWAYS been the desired outcome for our people. This is NOT new for Murray. It is an ongoing process to teach transitional skills.

Our people's range of needs are so complex, that means they are **time intensive, therapeutic intensive, educational intensive and medically intensive**. Consequently, our population's staffing requirements are highly unique within the state of Illinois.

Savannah came to her new home with severe, self-abusive behaviors needing helmet and knee pads. In recreation therapy the goal was to develop desired change in behavior by slowly introducing dance, developing computer and bike riding skills.

As Savannah progressed behaviorally she achieved outings to local places like the park and fruit orchard. As less supports were needed, trips to the movies and restaurants of her choice were introduced. Now her family members and friends are able to take her to typical community places. Just last fall Savannah participated in a fashion show at the Centralia Cultural Center supported by a national clothing chain.

Savannah has utilized 9 out of our 10 specialists over a period of 5 years. We are so proud of her!!! — 9 out of 10 specialist over a 5 year period— She is just around the corner from reaching her 5th star according to the CRA 5 Star Quality Model!

Please do not take the 5th star away from Savannah...

Respectfully submitted,



Melissa Cavitt

il testimony
ity Therapy/Volunteer Services - Public Service Administrator,
mployee

K...

has been involving our people in community integration since the 60s? I
school volunteer in 1968 taking our people to the community swimming
/.

**community integration is NOT our goal,
it is who we are!**

ir people into a typical community venue of their choice. Remember we
realize!

ane likes the movies, and Mary likes to shop.
people living at Murray Center?
individualized programs?
people can visit places in the community they CHOOSE, with the least

ing independence. The CRA 5 star quality citizen model has **ALWAYS**
people. This is **NOT** new for Murray. It is an ongoing process to teach

o complex, that means they are **time intensive, therapeutic intensive,**
daily intensive. Consequently, our population's staffing requirements are
inois.

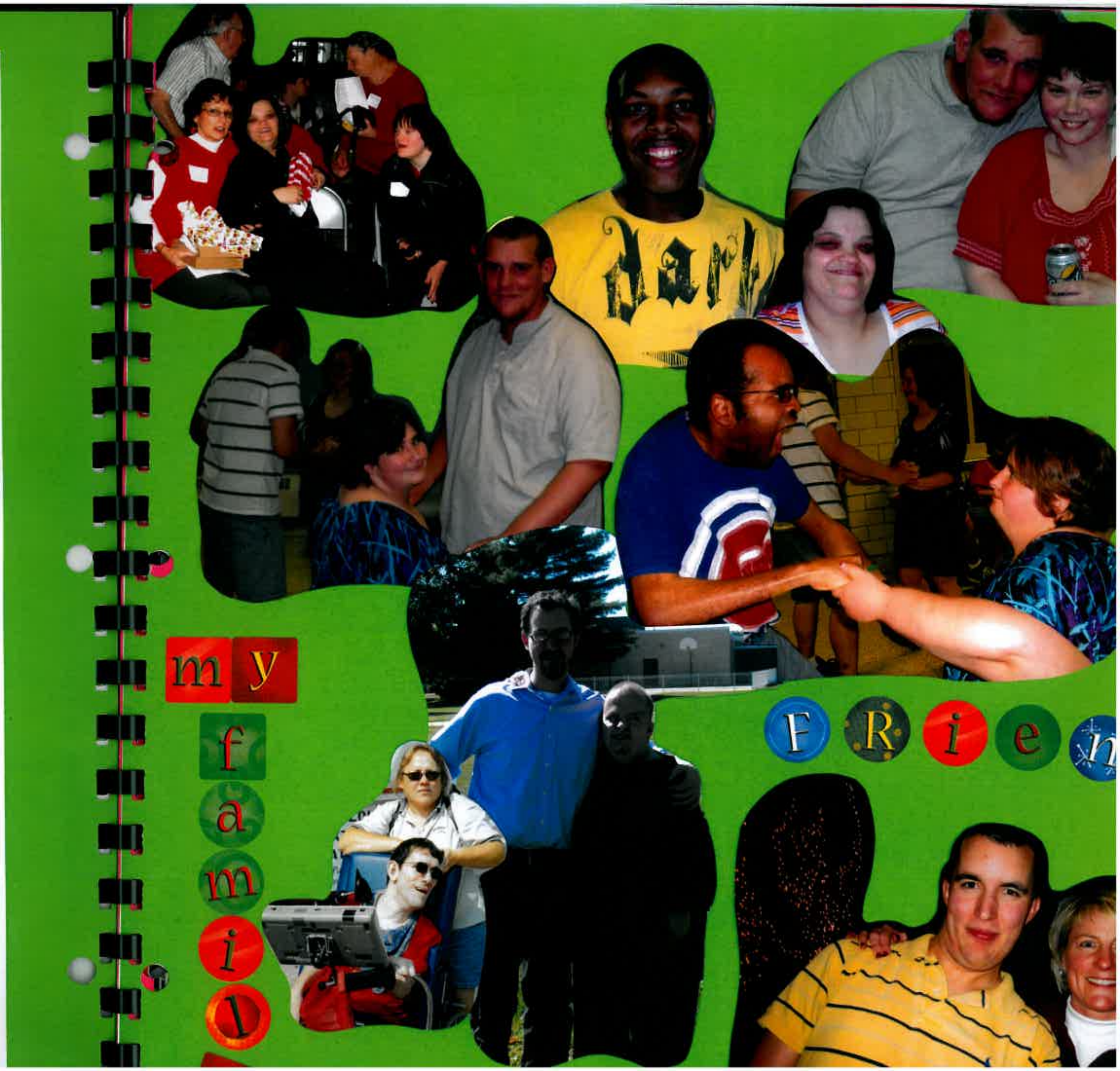
with severe, self-abusive behaviors needing helmet and knee pads. In
develop desired change in behavior by slowly introducing dance,
ng skills.

rally she achieved outings to local places like the park and fruit orchard.
s to the movies and restaurants of her choice were introduced. Now her
ble to take her to typical community places.
d in a fashion show at the Centralia Cultural Center supported by a

- 10 specialists over a period of 5 years. We are so proud of her!!! ---- 9
period---- She is just around the corner from reaching her 5th star
ity Model!

lo not take the 5th star away from Savannah...

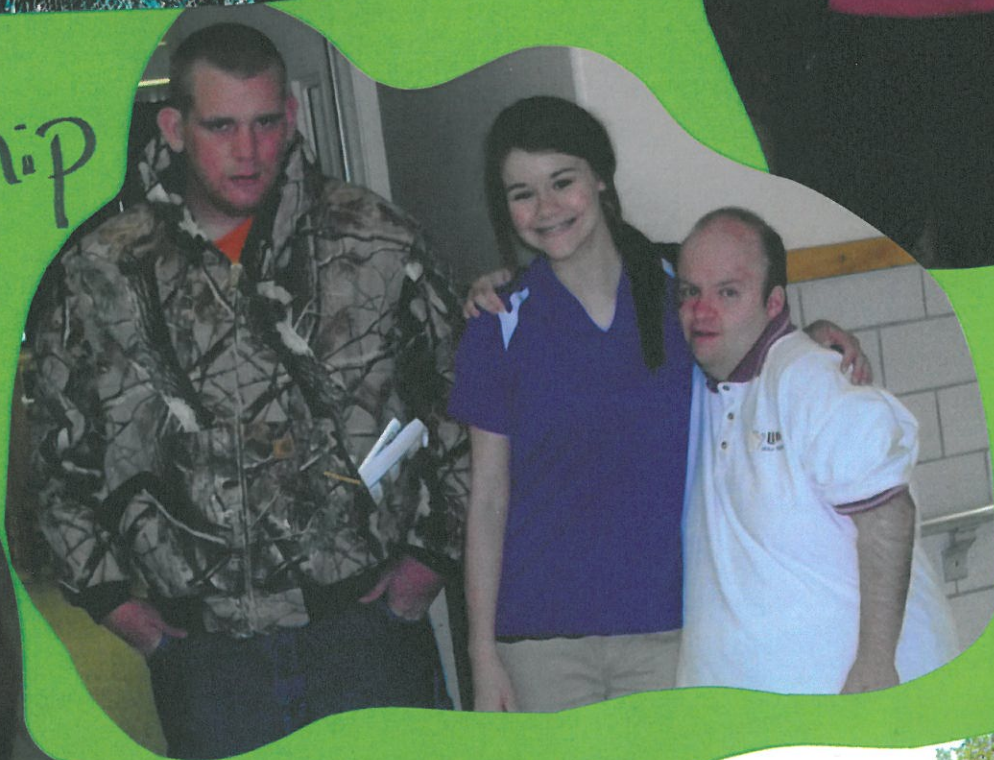
f



Friends



ship
+

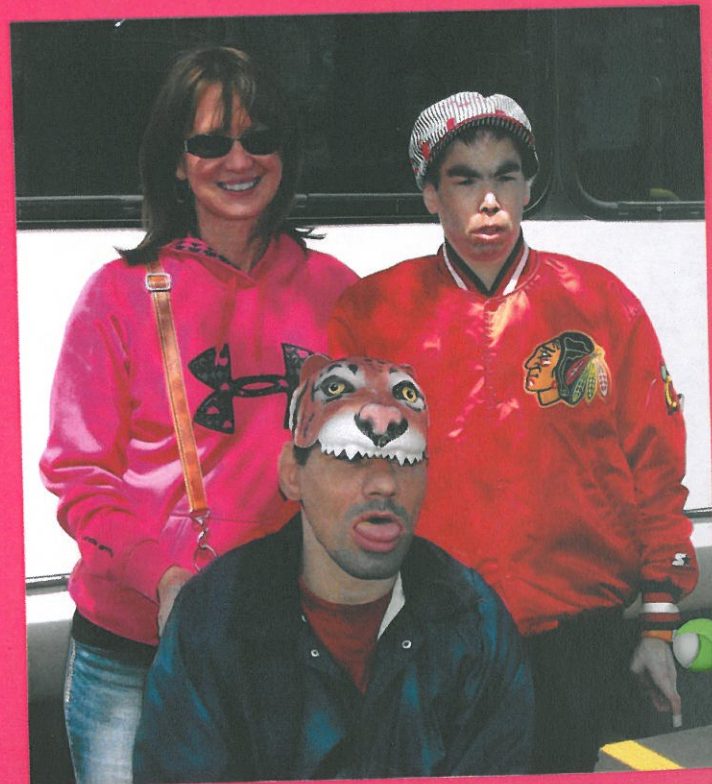
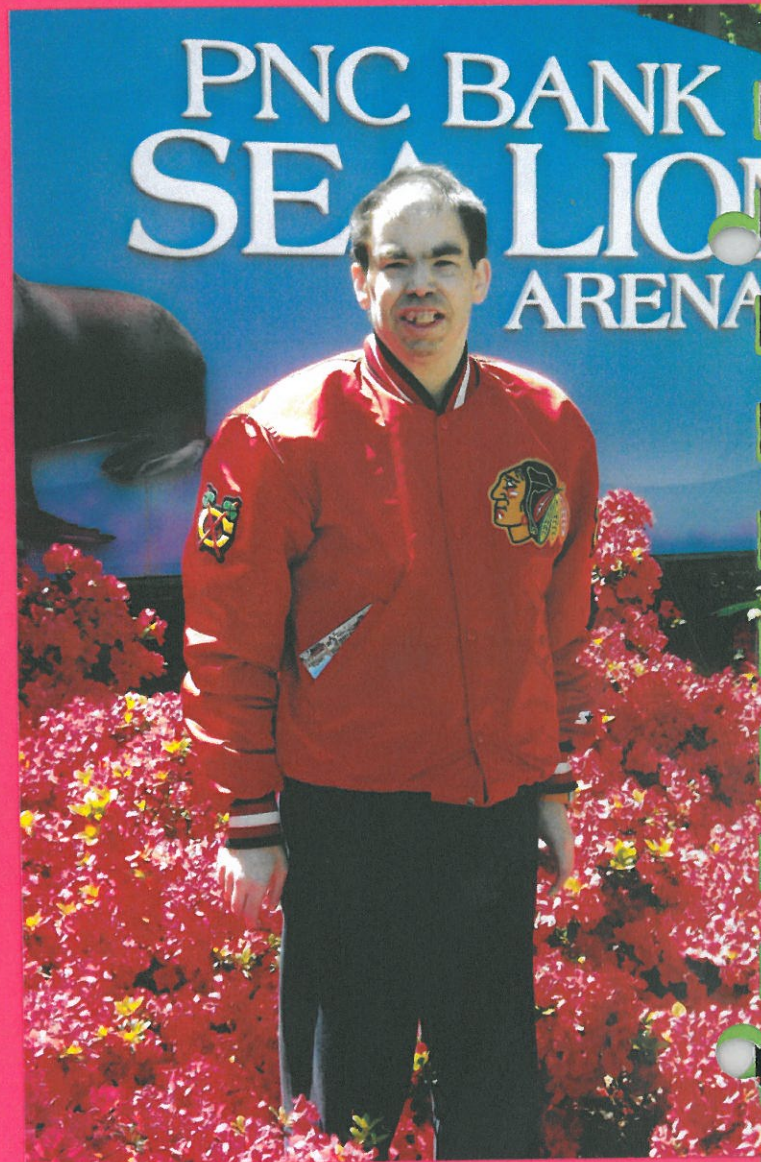
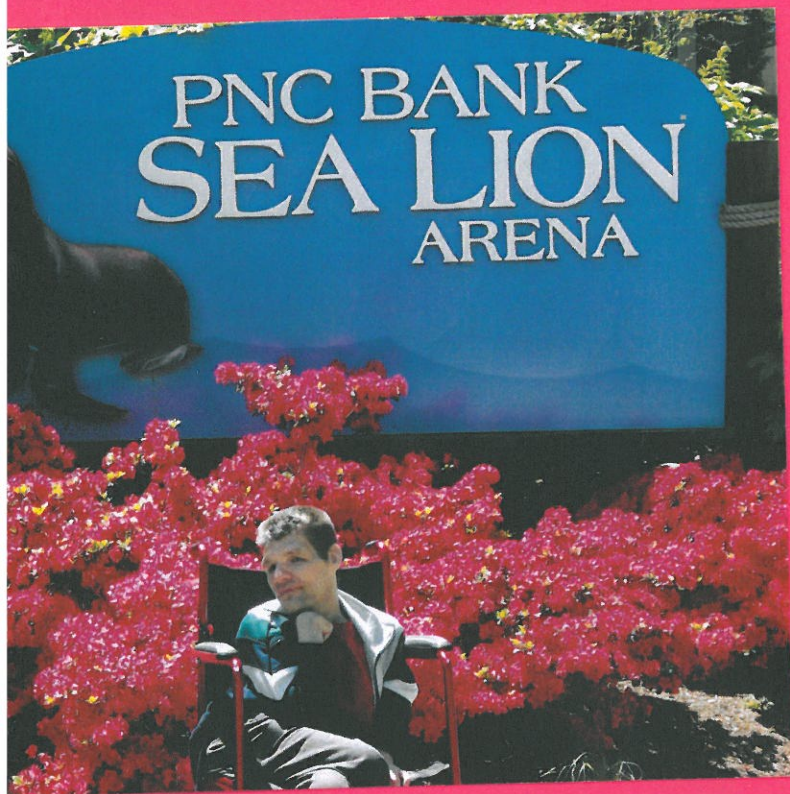


Dating



V
o
l
u
n
t
e
e





SUMMER TRIP



MORE
FRIENDS

ALL



FAITH



CHOICE

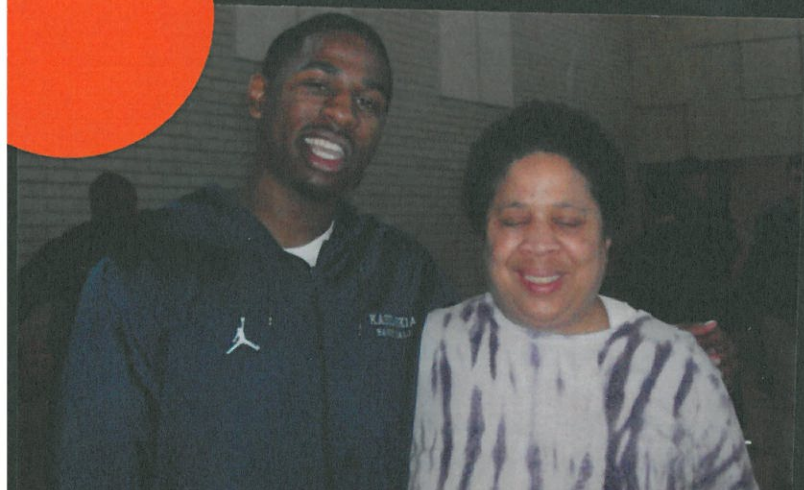
FREE

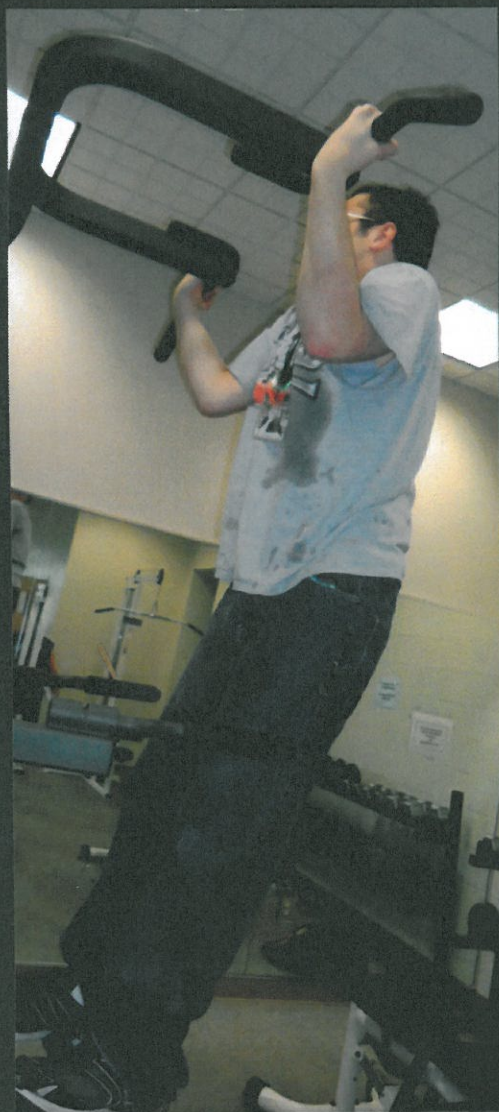


CENTER



05/29/2010





EXERCISE

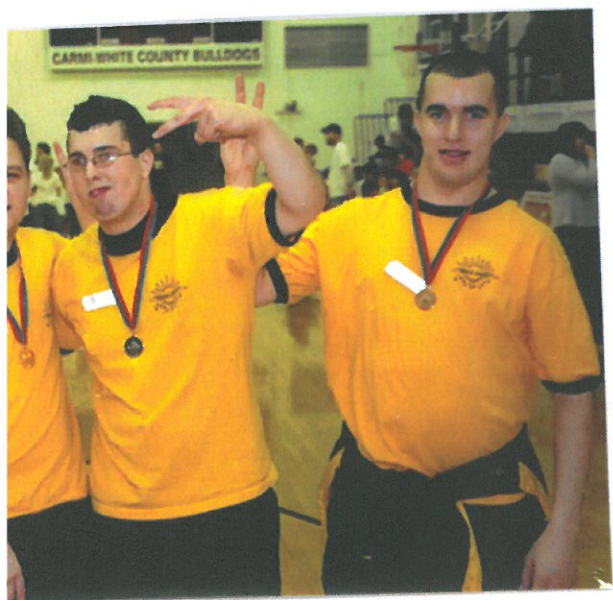
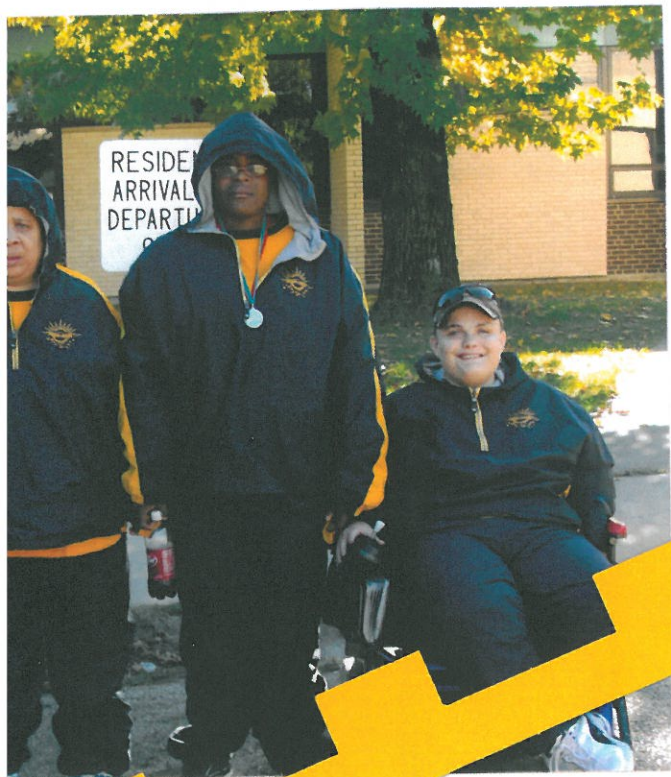


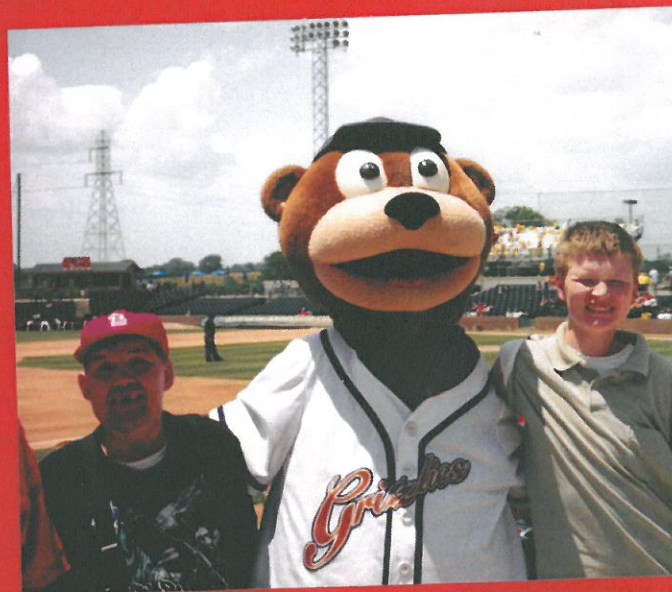


RUN!





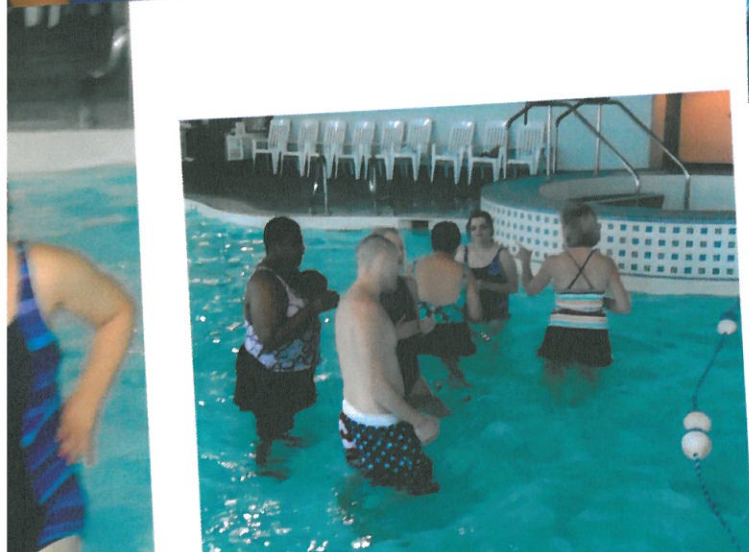




AY BALL!



ZOO



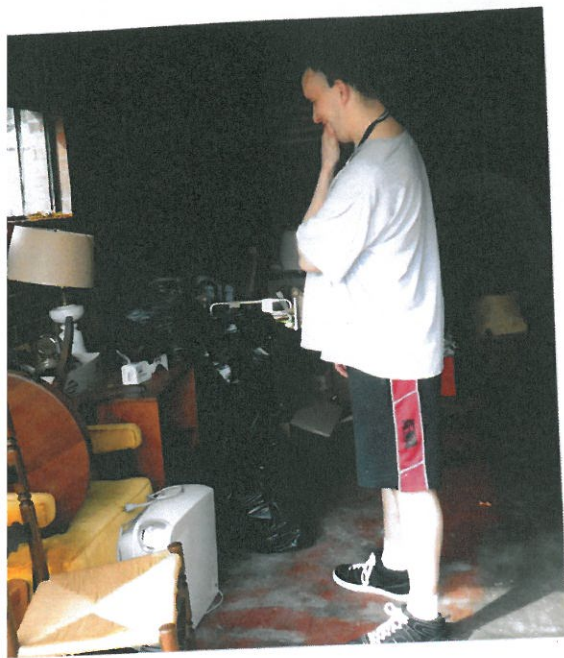
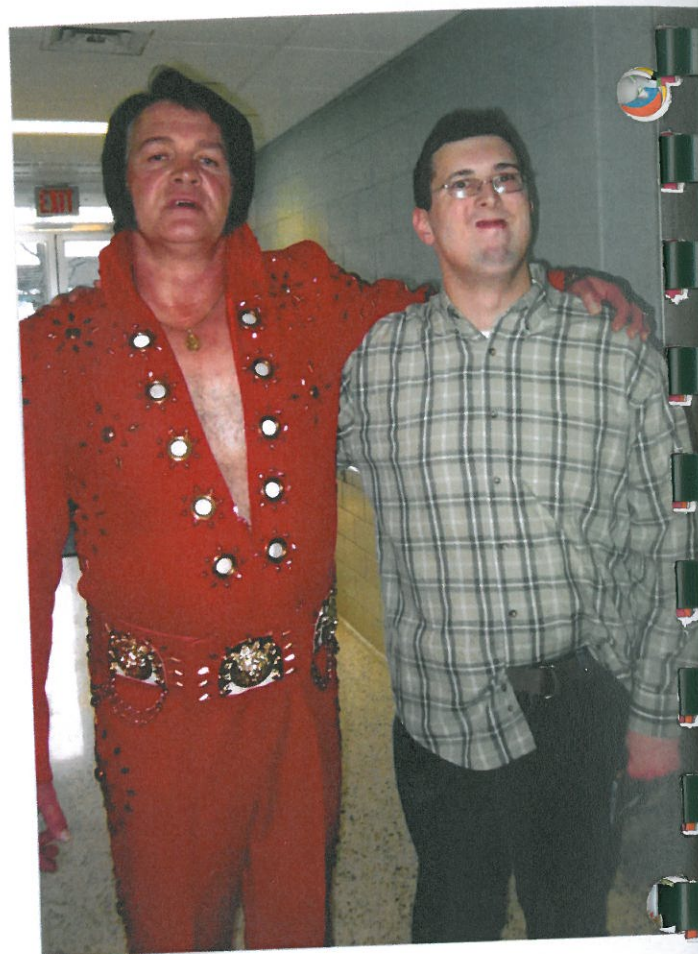
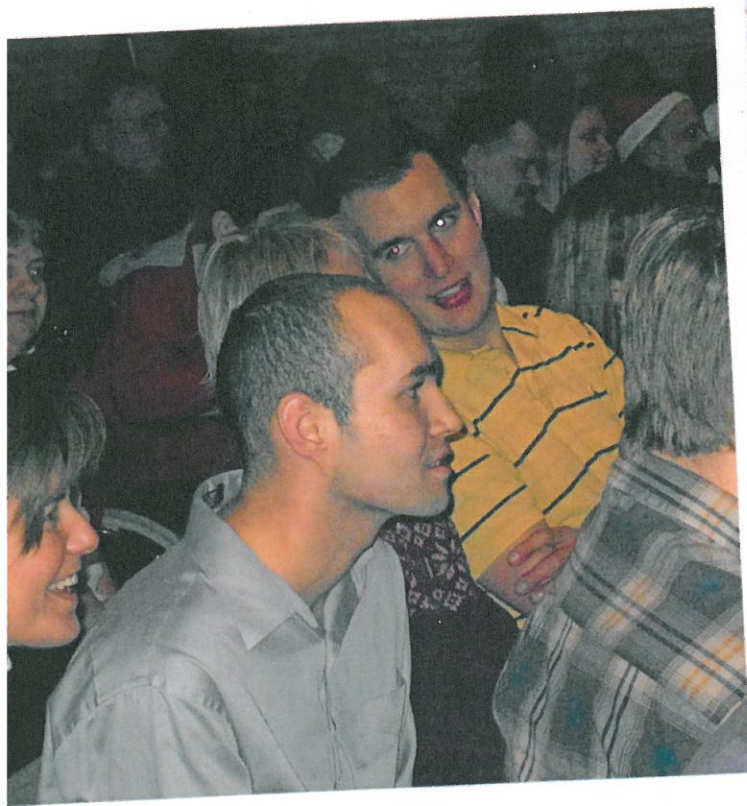
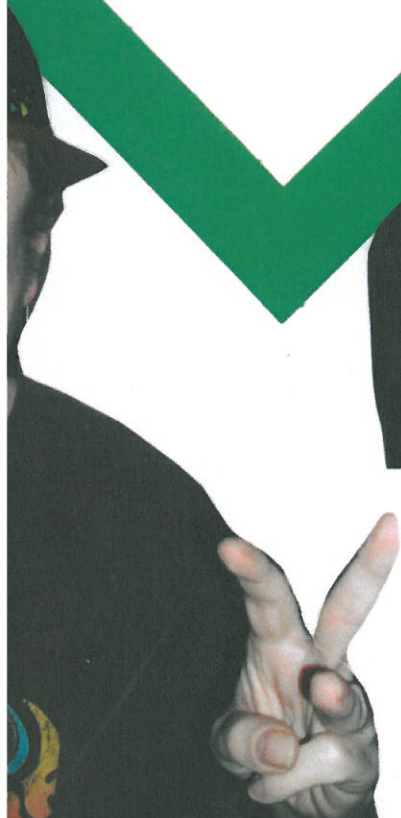


Image
Sale



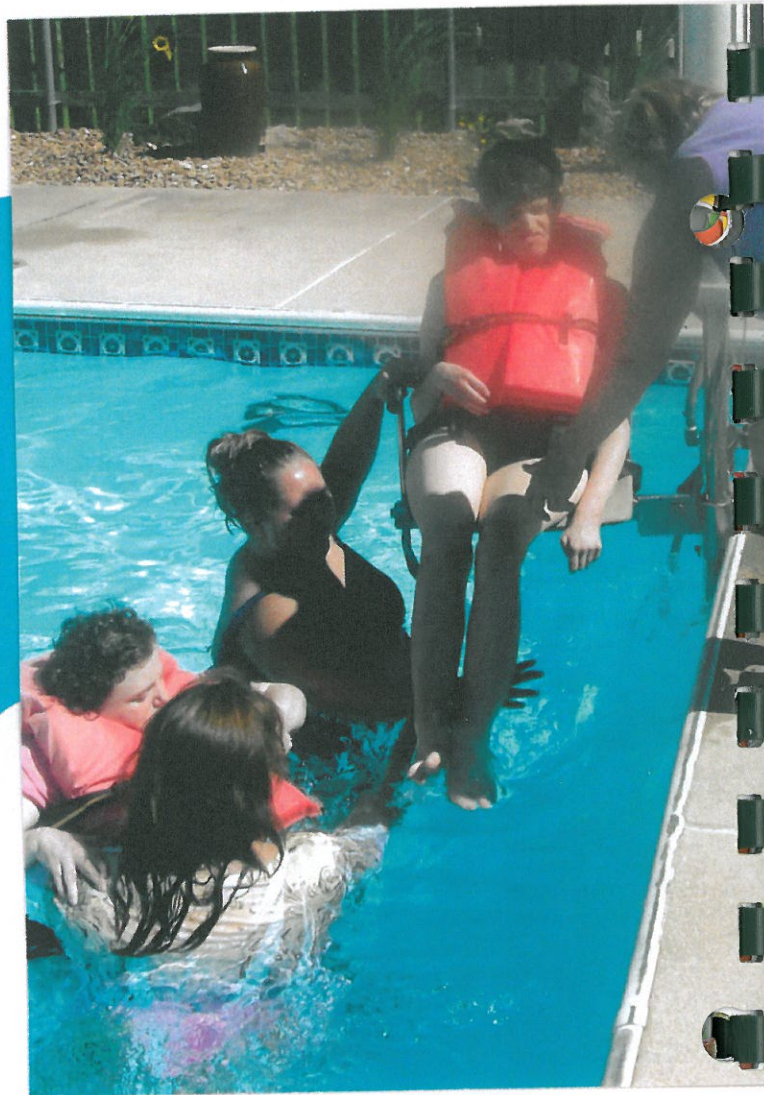
Elvis is
in the
House!

MARDI GRAS





Therapy
with
smiles!



oning Skills



Waitress



Serving



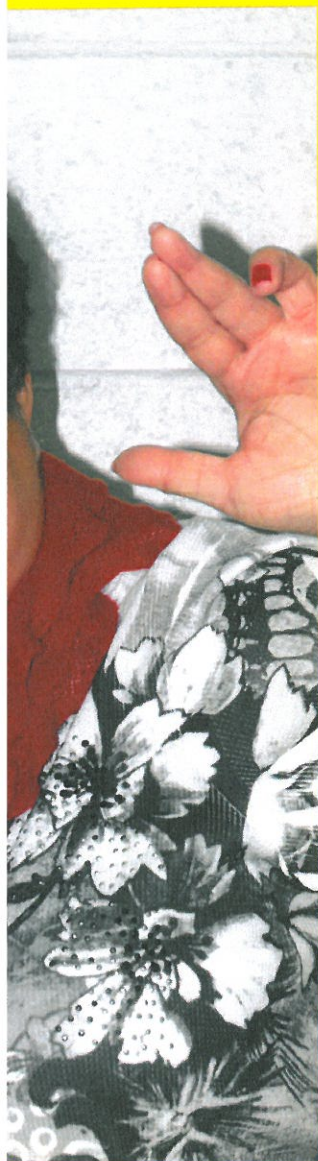
Leading



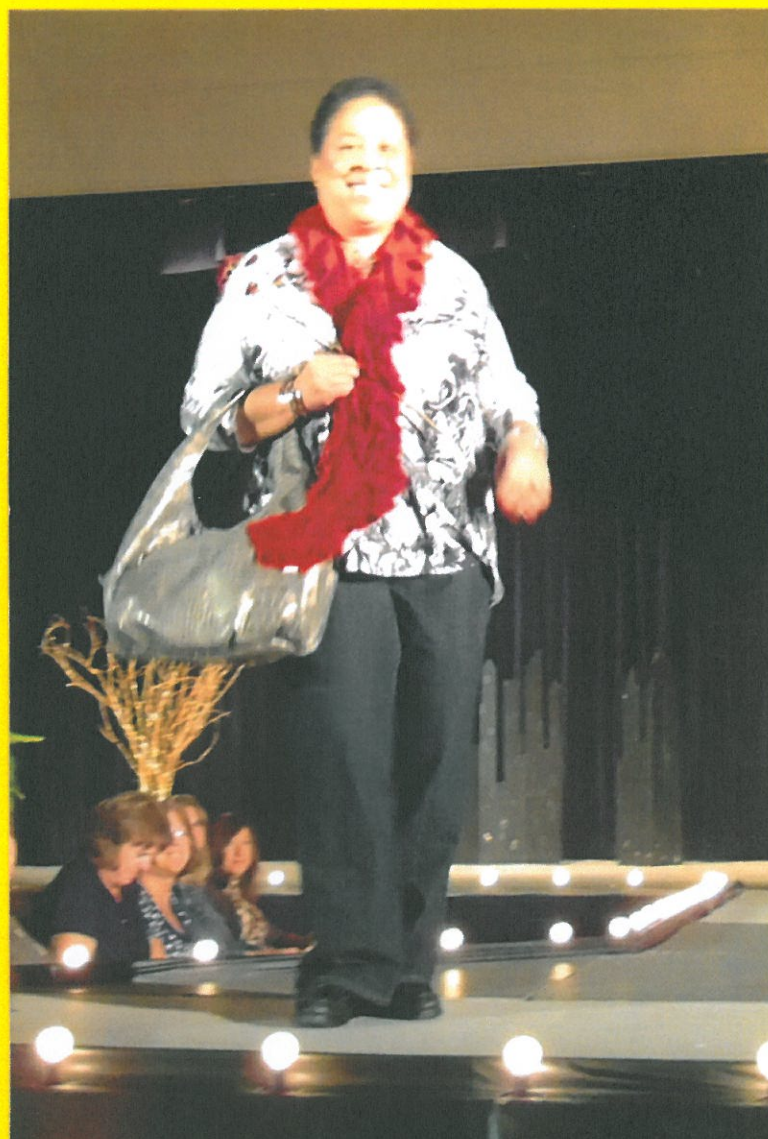
ay sets the

S
t
a
n
d
a
r
d

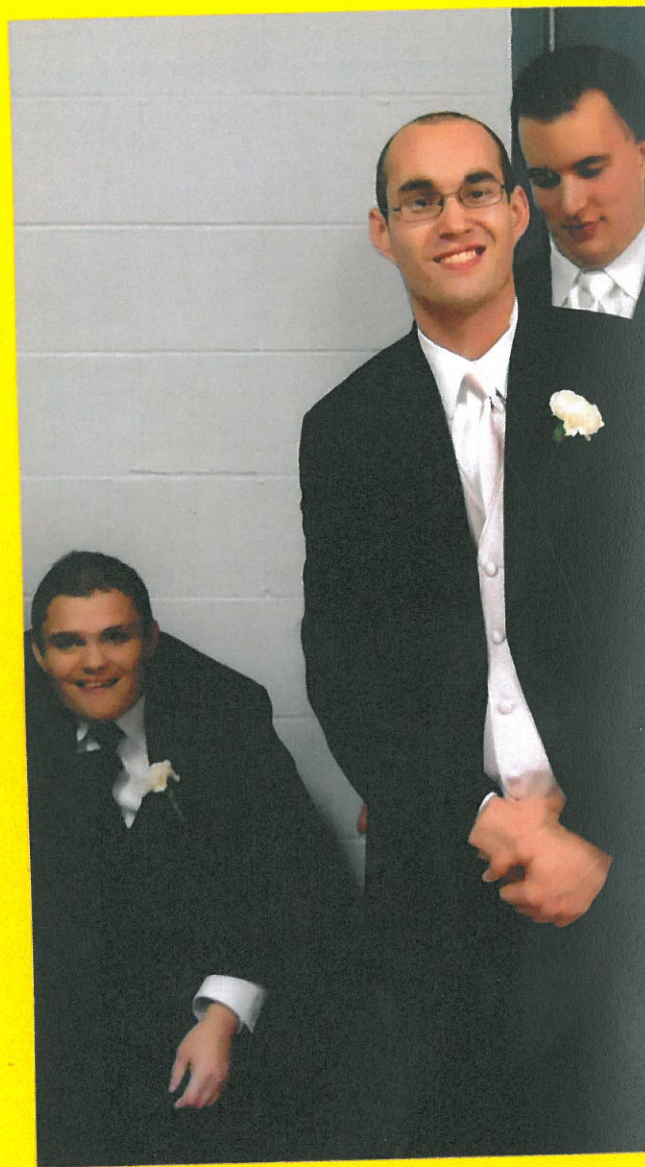




**F
A
S
H
I
O
N**



**S
H
O
W**



arking the
Runway...





My son Mark lives at Murray Center, and what Murray Center is all about is love.....he has a marvelous home with professional people who not only care for his physical needs, but his emotional needs. The smile on his face when we go see him tells me he is loved. Mark is 27 years old and has lived at Murray Center for 16 years. He is 6 foot 3, weighs 175 pounds and functions like a 9 month old. His room which is decorated with Cardinals on one side and Cubs on the other is a far nice room than my sons had at college, and they went to the University of Chicago and Loyola. He has free reign to walk throughout the cottage, and since he functions like a 9 month old , needing total care in eating, dressing, having his diaper changed, this is one thing he can do for himself, and that is walk, and he is safe wherever he goes. The medical care he receives is fabulous. I truly believe Mark would be dead if he did not have the quality care he receives at Murray Center, which he would never receive in a group home. My brother lives in a group home, and he functions as a 7 year old but is able to talk and tell me everything that happens....and boy does it happen. There is always only one staff on for 7 clients. Last week a client attacked a staff, and the police refused to come, then the client attacked the staff again, and luckily had his cell phone on, and finally the cops came. This happened in front of the other 6 clients, and they were helpless to do anything. This would NOT happen at Murray Center, as even if a client became violent there would be more than one person on staff to assist. Also, last year a client walked outside, stripped off all his clothes, and went running throughout the neighborhood. Luckily we were visiting so we stayed with the other clients so the one person on staff could try to get the client back. Another time a client called the police on a staff member, telling the police the staff member had a gun. The police came, threw the staff on the ground, handcuffed him, and hauled him off, leaving the clients unattended, and having had to view this arrest, which was of course bogus. The only way we found out about this was when my brother called to tell us. We were never informed by the group home. Another time we came to visit and the clients said they could not use hot water to wash their clothes as the team leader said they used too much water. I thought they were kidding.....no they weren't. I took a picture of a duct taped closed hot water valve, and finally after calling the the case coordinator for the home the hot water was turned back on. Also, with only one staff on when one of them throws a tantrum the whole home is penalized as they can't participate in community outings, as they have no backup. My son MARK is far more involved in the community than my brother is. Colleges are institutions, as are schools, etc. I sure haven't heard anyone talk about shutting down colleges. What bothers me the most is that Governor Quinn has not once visited Murray Center. We have invited him so many times and not once has he been there. What if it were his child? Would he have taken his 9 month old son and just moved him 300 miles away or let him go live with strangers who were left with him 24 hours a day with only one person on staff. Anything could happen, and it does. We as a society are to be judged by how we care for the least among us.....don't throw my son to the wolves to solve our budget problem. He too is human, and I am his voice.

KEEP MURRAY CENTER HOME.....THIS IS HIS HOME!!!! How dare Arc and Gov. Quinn tell me what is best for my child.

Rita Winkeler

I am writing the State of Illinois today to STRONGLY OPPOSE the proposed closing of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. My brother-in-law, Mark Winkeler, is a resident who has lived there for 16 years. It would put an extreme hardship on him and his family if Murray Center closed. My in-laws, Rita and Bernard (Jitty) Winkeler are active members of the parents group Murray Parents Association. We know that Mark is safe at Murray Center, where they have round the clock medical staff available to care for him. This center also enables him to go home and visit his parents and have field trips in the community that increases his quality of life. This is a life that he would not be able to enjoy living in a nursing home or another facility far away from the family that loves him.

We are all heartbroken at the idea of closing this valuable institution that does so much good for its residents. Murray Center also employs many caring, hardworking individuals. Closing the center would not only harm Mark and his family, but it would also put many people out of work in a recession.

As a citizen and a taxpayer, I find it appalling that our lawmakers and governor can even consider closing Murray Developmental Center. We morally have a special obligation to care for those who cannot care for themselves. We cannot allow our lawmakers to balance our budget at the expense of the disabled.

Sincerely,

Sara Jatcko
1461 W Winona St.
Apt. 3
Chicago, IL 60640

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing the State of Illinois today to STRONGLY OPPOSE the proposed closing of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. My friend, Mark Winkeler, is a resident who has lived there for 16 years.

It would put an extreme hardship on him and his family if Murray Center closed. His parents, Rita and Bernard (Jitty) Winkeler are active members of the parents group Murray Parents Association. We know that Mark is safe at Murray Center, where they have round the clock medical staff available to care for him. This center also enables him to go home and visit his parents and have field trips in the community that increases his quality of life. This is a life that he would not be able to enjoy living in a nursing home or another facility far away from the family that loves him.

We are all heartbroken at the idea of closing this valuable institution that does so much good for its residents. Murray Center also employs many caring, hardworking individuals. Closing the center would not only harm Mark and his family, but it would also put many people out of work in a recession.

As a citizen and a taxpayer, I find it appalling that our lawmakers and governor can even consider closing Murray Developmental Center. We morally have a special obligation to care for those who cannot care for themselves. We cannot allow our lawmakers to balance our budget at the expense of the disabled.

Sincerely,
Carley Moseley

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing the State of Illinois today to **STRONGLY OPPOSE** the proposed closing of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. My friend, Mark Winkeler, is a resident who has lived there for 16 years.

It would put an extreme hardship on him and his family if Murray Center closed. His parents, like the parents of so many residents, are active members of the parents group Murray Parents Association. We know that Mark is safe at Murray Center, where they have round the clock medical staff available to care for him. This center also enables him to go home and visit his parents and have field trips in the community that increases his quality of life. This is a life that he would not be able to enjoy living in a nursing home or another facility far away from the family that loves him.

We are all heartbroken at the idea of closing this valuable institution that does so much good for its residents. Murray Center also employs many caring, hardworking individuals. Closing the center would not only harm Mark and his family, but it would also put many people out of work in a recession.

As a citizen and a taxpayer, I find it appalling that our lawmakers and governor can even consider closing Murray Developmental Center. We morally have a special obligation to care for those who cannot care for themselves. We cannot allow our lawmakers to balance our budget at the expense of the disabled.

Sincerely,
Lucy Cantwell

To Whom it May Concern,

I would like to express outrage at the proposed closing of the Murray Center in Centralia. This center provides support not only for persons with developmental disabilities, but also for their families. Closing the center would negatively affect all involved, resulting in poorer quality of life for residents, additional burden on families, and loss of jobs for employees.

Although the economic situation is difficult, as an Illinois state resident I am glad to support deserving facilities such as the Murray Center. The decision to close the center would be, at best, short sighted, and at worst a failure on the part of the state to provide services for those that most need them.

I hope that you will reconsider closing the Murray Center.

Thank you,

Casey Noble
resident of Chicago, IL

To whom it may concern:

I am e-mailing you regarding the proposed closure of Murray Center in Centralia, IL. My name is Alicia Creed and I have worked at Murray Center for 2 years as a Registered Nurse. I have many concerns regarding this plan.

As one of the largest employers in the area, who is in one of the highest unemployment areas in Illinois, I cannot see where this would be an effective budget plan causing 550+ jobs to be lost. So many people depend on Murray Center to provide for their families, and there are many husband/wife couples who work at Murray who would be losing their whole household income, insurance, etc. It's sad when you have a situation where people want to come to work and love their jobs, but the state puts your employment at risk.

The most important reason I believe to keep Murray open is for the residents. The quality of care residents receive at Murray is far exceeding most facilities. Murray can prove their quality of care by looking at the rate of wheel chair bound residents, with the number of pressure ulcers...0! As a previous nursing home employee I feel this is a huge accomplishment and pat on the back for Murray Center. Even though Murray Center is referred to as an institution the individuals see Murray as their home and they are a happy, energetic group. They have friends, outings, dances, a swimming pool, trip to the St. Louis Zoo, trips to sports events, the list could go on and on of what Murray offers to these individuals. Some residents even refer to their room as their "apartment" at Murray Center. The staff love the residents like their own. Every resident out there has qualities that make them unique and special that staff see. With the proposed closure, Murray was at first more of a somber area with many tears shed fearing the loss of the residents homes and staffs jobs. In recent days individuals and staff are ready to show Gov. Quinn why Murray Center is special to our hearts and help him realize what he is proposing may look good on paper, but not in reality. Though it would be nice to say everyone if a candidate to move into a group home or community facility, that is just not the case. I hope you will be able to see what a special place Murray Center is to us all, and help us keep Murray open and running as the great facility it is!

Sincerely,
Alicia Creed, R.N.

From: James & Judy Akers (Parents of Warren Murray Center Resident)

To: All Senators, Congressmen and Representatives

Subj: Closure of Warren Murray Center

1 March 2012

Recently it has come to my attention that the State of Illinois is in the process of shutting down the Warren Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois. This is very upsetting to my wife and I, for our daughter Jessica has lived at this center for several years and is quite happy there and well taken care of. My wife and I can sleep easy at night knowing that Jessica is in good hands. Every single employee that I have worked with at this center has gone out of their way to assist you in any way possible. It is my understanding that the State wants to send our sons and daughters out into assisted living homes. That may be okay for some but what the state needs to understand is some cannot function in that environment. Since being placed at Warren Murray my daughter Jessica has been sent to these assisted living homes twice both times she injured staff and residences plus they even called law enforcement and had her arrested because they could not handle her. Do you realize how traumatizing that was for her? She cannot function in that environment she has to be in a well structured environment like the one Warren Murray provides. So I guess these sons and daughters just get thrown in the wind. It is a sorry day when our Politian's go after the people that can't fight back. Every time there is a problem with the budget our handicapped are the ones to get the ax. Why doesn't our government look at all the people living on welfare, or maybe we should stop sending so much money to all these foreign countries, providing handouts to all the foreigners who live in our country and start taking care of our own people here in the USA. Warren Murray has really made a difference in my daughter's life and the people there really work hard for our handicapped children. Warren Marry takes care of central and southern Illinois which is a very large area so why the State would want to close it on top of it being one of the newest facilities it makes no since to close it. Plus Warren Murray is the only home in the State of Illinois that made money for the state so why the need to close. I served this country in the Marine Corps for twenty-two years and I for one am just sick of where our Politian's have lead this country. This used to be the greatest country in the world. I am just not so sure now. I am going to do everything in my power whether it be petitions or whatever to get every Senator and Congressmen currently in office voted out and maybe we will be able to vote some new ones in that care about the people and not their pocketbooks. I thought we were supposed to be creating jobs not putting people out of work. Our government keeps saying that they are creating new jobs but any American with any kind of sense knows that's our government just fudging the numbers because all I ever see is companies being shut down and good American citizens losing their jobs. I honestly don't know how our Politian's sleep at night knowing they are the ones forcing families to be homeless,

starving and out of work. Maybe it's time to lay off some Senators and Congressmen from their jobs they're not doing anything to help the country anyway. Warren Murray is a great institution and has done wonders for our children, to close such a valuable place would be such an injustice to our handicapped children and to the employee's that work at this wonderful place where I know that my daughter is safe. I hope that every Governor, Senator, Congressmen and Representative know that there is a saying in the State of Illinois and that is we are the only state that has Governors making License Plates. Maybe the state needs to add a few Senators and Congressmen to that list. This Great Country of ours with the current leadership is in such horrible shape. It is just a shame.

James R. Akers

Judy L. Akers

I'm writing to express my opposition to the closing of The Murray Developmental Center.

Cathleen McGraw
Eau Claire, Wi

The people who live at Murray Center appreciate calling Murray Center their home, along with the family, friends, staff, and the community, who support one another. The relationship between the people at Murray Center and their community help to provide one another with the care, friendship, and support needed to thrive. The consistency, structure, safety, and loving care provided at Murray Center continues to be seen.

Please reconsider!! Thanks for your attention in this matter and God Bless!!

Rodney Wehking

I am writing to oppose the closing of murray center. It is a home to some 275 individuals who has excellent care and has a real home environment. It would cause some to have behavior problems when moved out if their home which many cila's would'n know how to deal with because of the high turnover of staff which murray center doesn't have because the staff at murray center loves working with the individuals and enjoys it when the individuals can go home and live with their families .The individuals receive excellent care and love when I personally think will not receive in a cila home because when you see in the paper where a cila home in hiring all the time when it can't keep employees because of they don't care about the individuals who live there.A lot of the staff that work at murray center have benn there over 25 years which speaks for it self.So in closing I hope you change gov quinn mind about closing

murray center because it about the people who live at murray center and their lifes and not about the almighty dollar which quinn wants to save.

Thank You.

As a sister of a resident of Murray Center, I can't even begin to explain the importance of this center and what it has meant to my family. My brother requires 24 hour care, and the staff at Murray Center have helped John and my family stay together as a family while helping him with all of his medical and care needs that he requires. John has been with the family at Murray Center for 20 years. Closing that facility and moving him elsewhere is unimaginable for my family. John sees Murray Center as his home with loving people there as his other family. Has the governor visited these current facilities? Has he visited the places where they are moved? Has he spent any time personally researching what happens to these residents?

I ask that this move to close Murray Center be stopped. To consider closing a facility in the southern part of our state that would put 550 people out of worrk makes no sense. As a business owner in Breese, IL, I know how loss of jobs will affect that community.

I ask that Murray Center stay open as the HOME it is for so many disabled people. Not closed for being a state institution that the governor sees.

Kathy Woroner
Fairview Heights, IL 62208

I oppose the closure of Murray Center. Please keep Murray Center open.

DO NOT CLOSE MURRAY CENTER. FIND SOMEWHERE ELSE TO CUT YOUR EXPENSES.

PLEASE DO NOT CLOSE MURRAY CENTER.. OUR COUNTRY NEEDS TO KEEP THESE JOBS FOR THE LOCALS IN CENTRALIA

Dear members of the Comission:

After hearing the news about the proposed closing of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois I feel I must express my concern on the behalf of the individual who depend on Murray Center for their health and welfare. I do not support this plan for closure.

Murray Center individuals are under the care of expereicned staff with specialized personnel working as direct care staff, doctors, nurses, pyschologists, dieticians, educators, speech and hearing specialists, and behavior analyst. It is the goal of every staff member to prepare the residents for successful community placement.

Closing Murray Center will disrupt the lives of 275 people with developmental disabilities, autism, and severe behavior challenges. These are people who struggle with inconsistency and change.

There are currently 21, 577 adults and children on the list for community services in Illinois that cannot be served. The governor's plan will add 275 additional citizens to the waiting list.

History shows us that when the state closes a center most people living there are moved to other larger centers so this benefit no one.

The individuals that live at Murray Center has twenty-four hour access to medical professionals and technicians specially trained to care behavior difficulties and developmental disabilities.

Murray Center is a safety net for the communnity serving the important role of crisis stabilization for individuals in southern Illinois who are unable to safely reside in their family homes or community settings.

Please take into consideration the benefits of the services provide at Warren G. Murray Developmental Center.

Respectfully,
DeAnna Isaiah

I would like to submit a comment that I oppose the proposed closure of the Murray Center. I believe it would harm the residents, their families, and the staff. I would like to humbly submit that other plans be considered so the proposed closure does not affect the most vulnerable.

Thank you very much for your service.

Jean Marie Place

I am writing in opposition to the closure of Murray Center.

I have worked for Murray for almost 27 years. Although I do not directly work with the residents I do see the care and love they are given by the employees there. I have heard a few people from the Springfield & Chicago area say that our residents should be in the community and not in an institution. One gentleman that was saying this was in a wheelchair. He didn't have any other disability. If it weren't for his inability to walk he would be a "normal" everyday person. I would have to say I would agree with them, if our residents could live in a community based setting.

Apparently this gentleman and the rest of the people making these comments have never been to Murray Center. They don't understand that our residents aren't even as well off as the gentleman in the wheelchair. Many of them are children living in adult bodies. Others don't even have a child IQ. And then there are those who are so fragile and need so much medical attention that no community setting could handle them. So where would these people go...right to another institution and then what have we accomplished.

Murray Center has always had a reputation of providing some of the best care in the State. The biggest problem is that we are not near Chicago. Murray Center has a very strong parents organization. The parents are very pro Murray Center. If they believed their loved ones were in jeopardy I don't believe they would have such strong feelings.

Then there is also the fact that Murray Center takes in about 30 million dollars in federal monies. What other facility does that? We basically pay for ourselves. I know the Governor is trying to use the excuse that our power house needs updating. I'm sure it does need some, but what about that 30 million?

I also know in the past and present time Murray has tried to place individuals in community based settings and many are not taken and some are only to return because the community settings couldn't handle them. Please check those numbers to see how many couldn't do it.

When you have a facility that has always given the best care, never had any severe findings or problems and is one of the newest facilities in DHS, how do you justify its closure when Choate MH Center is falling apart and the Dept of Justice has been living there because of their failed care?

Not only will our residents suffer but so will the employees of Murray and the community. Three fourths of our employees only need an 8th grade reading level or less to work there. In a community that doesn't have any other job opportunities where do you think these people will find employment. I can tell you..their new title will be public aid recipient. Then where has the Governor saved money? He believes they can all go to another State agency to work. I hope he can tell people where that would be.

I hope you can see that Murray Center is a very viable institution for the State. Thank you for your time.

Lori Beckmann

I wish to express my support for keeping Murray Center open in Centralia. This center is important for everyone concerned. For the employees of Murray, this is a company that provides paychecks for over 500 employees. For the residents, many of them who are mentally handicapped, they are able to receive quality, professional physical and mental care, around the clock.

The biggest reason I am writing to you, however, is because I wanted someone in Springfield to know that this issue has become a big deal in our town, bigger than what I've ever seen in my 9 years I've lived here. There are "Save Murray Center" signs everywhere you look, in small picket signs, and large wooden painted ones. Businesses are putting on their marquees "Save Murray Center" as well, or hanging signs in their windows. Even City Hall has a hand painted sign on their window. There are people out and about, asking for signatures on petitions to keep the center open. I've already seen two today, just running around town.

I am all for cutting back excessive government spending, but I don't believe that shutting down Murray would be a good idea in the long run. This place is too important to a town that is already economically depressed, and too important to the people who rely on Murray, both employees and residents. I never realized how critical this place was to our town until I saw the support here to keep this place open.

All I ask is one thing from you: Before you decide to vote to close Murray, at least come to our town first. Listen to the townspeople, look around at all the support, and talk with the people that work and live at Murray. If you still decide to vote to close Murray, then I will know that what I've heard all along is true: That Springfield is out of touch with the needs of the rest of the state.

Sincerely yours,

Cary Fugitt

Our individuals home is being jeopardized and they look at the staff as being part of their family and we feel the same way about them, not to mention what the closure of Murray Center would do to the City Of Centralia. So I ask that Gov. Quinn to please reconsider his decision to close Murray Vented!

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS!

Decenda Whitelow

To whom it may concern:

For over 40 years Warren G. Murray Developmental Center has been the home to individuals with developmental disabilities. Governor Pat Quinn has recently proposed in his budget for FY2013 that this center is shut down.

We need your help in stopping the forced unemployment of 550 people in an area with an already unreasonable unemployment rate of .11%. What kind of problems does the closure of this facility truly solve? How much money is it going to take to support the displaced workers? Whose responsibility is it going to be to pay the welfare checks of the freshly fired? Not to mention the new facilities who are going to end up with the residents of this facility OUT OF STATE! Thank you, governor, for insisting that these Illinois citizen be sent to another state. How did you plan on making money for your budget by sending away your OWN taxpaying, economy boosting, VOTING populace? Murray Center is where over approximately 275 residents call home. How would you feel if one day a stranger came in and shoved you out of your home and locked the door behind you with a "good luck" pat on the back? With no true transition proposal this is the only way one can assume you plan to "transition".

This may be a political game to you but you are messing with people's lives with complete disregard to their repercussions. If you were truly concerned about the people of your state you would have declined the raises for yourself and your political partners over the past year. This would have shown true concern and compassion for those of us at Murray Center who have gone for a year without our cost of living raises and still being thrown under the bus so you can retain and acquire more of your luxuries. You are proposing that Murray Center be shut down so that you can secure you and friends a yearly raise that I am sure you did not exclude from your budget.

I and thousands of other will not let the closure of this facility happen easily. We are prepared to fight with whatever it takes to keep these individuals safe. We will do whatever it takes to protect our families.

Only a true coward would target facilities for individuals with developmental disabilities and a center that offers services for people with mental illness because often times the individuals in which facilities like ours house do not have a voice. Do you not think they have a right to be heard? I implore you to ask them yourselves. Walk into the center and see for yourself what kind of devastation you would be responsible for. Ask them yourself where they want to live when you slam the doors of their home shut and lock them out for good. The voice of the residents here are strong and bold. How cowardly to target a small town in Southern Illinois with far less resources to bounce back from a devastating blow like the closure of Murray Center. Out of sight, out of mind right? As soon as you see to it that we are closed, it's the last you'll ever have to think of the facility, the employees or the individuals who call the center a home.

Instead of spreading more devastation to Illinois why not try to build it back up and focus on the potential we have here. Warren G. Murray Developmental Center currently houses 275 individuals but has the room to be home to 400. This center currently employs 550 citizens in an already struggling

community, but has the potential to employ over 600. Why not focus on how to make this place better and how it can better serve Illinois as a whole instead of destroying it completely?

I sincerely thank you for your time,

Sara M. Spencer 03/04/2012

My son Mark has been living at Murray Center for 16 years and we call it his HOME. It would be devastating to him if Murray Center would close and he would be forced to live in a group home that arc so much loves. I can sleep at night knowing that Mark is being WELL taken care of by a WELL trained staff. All of our son's needs and then some are taken care of. A kitchen staff has asked us if he could take Mark for a walk on his own time and we gave him permission. The excellent staff at Murray Center will always call us if there is something wrong with Mark.

I feel that the staff at Murray Center is like family to us. We laugh and cry with them. Our son has the freedom to roam wherever he wants to . Mark is 27 years old and has the mentality of a 9 month old. He can't talk, feed himself and he wears a diaper. He can only walk and Murray Center gives him this freedom.

Please do not deprive him of this. arc will tell you that a group home is better than Murray Center but guess what? I have a brother inlaw that lives at group home. We visit there every week. The clients there can talk, walk, go to the bathroom by themselves, clean themselves, feed themselves. They do their own laundry, help clean up and they workk at the workshop. The only thing that our son can do and that is walk. In a group home our son could only walk the hall like an animal in a cage. In Murray he can walk the whole building. My brother inlaw's group home has only one staff working and there was an incident that happened when one of the clients just took off all his clothes and took off. We took care of the rest of the clients while he went after the naked client. If they all wanted to go out for supper and my brother inlaw didn't want to go...guess what...they didn't go. With only one staff on duty what are they do do? The group home has bedrooms that are nice looking but guess what? My son's room is decorated in Cards-Cubs theme. We had his room painted and we bought and picked out the color. We picked out the curtains. In other words we did his whole room the way we wanted. You know I could go on forever. I wish I could have my my 2 minutes at the meeting but you would only hear me cry for my son and the rest of the childreb there. I will close for now but I will leave you with these words.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF THIS WAS YOUR LOVED ONE?

Bernard A. Winkeler

I wonder if the Governor would be in favor of closing the Murray Center if he had an adult child there that needs to have a place to live. What are the alternative if Murray Center is closed? I never have had the occasion to visit Murray Center. I did have occasion to visit Bowen Center years ago. They did a marvelous job of getting a troubled child on track. He is now a successful individual earning a living.

I have a friend with a Child there. Their Child was in Bowen Center at Harrisburg. It was closed several years ago. They live within 60 miles from Murray Center and can bring their adult child home occasionally. He is always happy to come home for the week-end but is also glad to be back in Murray Center.

I urge you to find some other method of reducing the deficit. I think that eliminating waste and perhaps a few unnecessary staff could solve most of our financial problems

Grover Burkett

Centralia has been a struggling existence for many years - converse to how they thrived in the 70's when I still lived there. Please don't take away one of the last larger employers in the town and help to obliterate Centralia from the map. There have got to be some better options . . . please take the time to look into options/alternatives for them specifically - the people that live there deserve a chance to stay there!

M Burge

I am protesting our State of Illinois plan to close Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. Not only will this be a great disservice to the residents of that facility who are in great need of the service this facility provides, but it will add to the great burden of unemployment that Illinois is experiencing at this time.

Sincerely,

Rose M. Juneau
602 Edwards Street
Aurora, Illinois 60505

March 4, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Kaitlyn Ainscough i am 10 years old i love the people who need taken care of at Murray Center and the people who take care of them. My grandma works at Murray Center she loves her job and all the people who need to be taken care of love the people who take care of them are you going to take that away from them? And are you going to take them away from me? There is a old women who i love the most and i get to see her when visit my grandma. She waits for my grandma when she comes to work and expects a kiss and hug from her.

This is her home and all the other residents home. Are you really going to take that away from them? There not going to love the place you have planed for them to stay. They are going to think who done this to them. I love the place where they are and they love the place where they are. I love the old women who i said that my grandma takes care of. She is cute and funny and that's why i love her are you going to take her away from me? I don't want to come visit one day and ask how the old women is and then my grandma will say she is gone. I hope you understand.

My grandma has had several jobs in the last 10 years and 3 other places she has worked has closed in town. She was hoping to get to keep this job. This is going to hurt the residents and my grandma and our home town. Please keep Murray Center open for our residents i love and for all the people who take care of them.

Thank you,
Kaitlyn Ainscough
341 W 13th
Centralia, IL 62801

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today because I am deeply concerned about the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. My brother, Mark Winkeler, has been a resident there for sixteen years. He was born with cerebral palsy. Mark cannot speak, feed himself, dress himself, or use a toilet on his own. While he has made great developmental strides with the help of the devoted and knowledgeable staff at Murray Center, he will never be able to live without constant care. My family, friends, and I are angry and afraid about the possibility that Mark will be forced to leave the facility where he has spent most of his life, where the staff know him and can provide the individualized care he needs, and where a devoted group of parents and community members will look out for him. We do not know where else Mark would go if Murray Center were to close – neither group homes or nursing homes offer the developmental, educational, and medical services he requires.

I write to you not only because of my concern for my brother Mark, but out of concern for the 275 other residents at Murray Center. I have visited there many times, and have volunteered there. I have seen the various disabilities that many suffer from. Some residents are on respirators, others require frequent medical attention, and all require specialized developmental and medical care. Those of us who have spent time at Murray Center know that the residents are safe with Murray Center's round-the-clock on-site medical staff. Such services are neither available – nor economically feasible – in a group home or nursing home setting. Moreover, the countless years of professional experience embodied in Murray Center's five hundred employees means that each resident is treated as an individual, receiving the care they need and deserve. I am deeply disappointed in the State of Illinois's willingness to wantonly discard all of these employees and leave the residents they have cared for to an uncertain future.

I strongly ask that you oppose closing Murray Center. This is bigger than party, or politics, or budgetary concerns; it is about caring for those who are incapable of caring for themselves, or even speaking for themselves. Our State, and its government and citizens, should be judged by how we have chosen to treat our weakest members. We cannot in good conscience push the budgetary mistakes we have made onto those who do not, and should not, bear the responsibility for those mistakes.

I invite you to visit Murray Center, meet the residents and employees, and speak with their families. Once you have seen the residents and heard their stories, you will understand the critical service that Murray Center provides to the community, and the state as a whole.

Sincerely,

Robert Winkeler
1461 W. Winona St.
Apt 3
Chicago, IL 60640

Dear Governor Quinn,

Understanding the State of IL has been in a precarious financial dilemma since you have taken office and that you are working hard to remedy that situation, I am asking that you give a second consideration to the closing of our State Institutions for the mentally disabled. I was born and raised in Centralia, IL. and now reside in Crystal Lake.

During my childhood and adolescence we were a prospering community. The 'ideal' small town environment to grow up in. As we neared our high school graduation in 1973 several of my friends saw their parents forced into early retirement as the IL Central Railroad Shops closed down and the Federal government mandated IL Bell Telephone to relinquish its monopoly. Manual jobs that did not require college degrees. Those simultaneous closures impacted our community tremendously and the small upward growth we had, slowly began to recede. At one point the economy increased when the State of IL built a prison near Kaskaskia College. Though it wasn't the employer the community would have preferred, it did bring jobs to the area.

Since 2008 and the decline of the real estate market, life in this small community has been nothing more than stagnant. My mother and stepfather made the mistake in the summer of 2007 of deciding to sell their 2-story home on Rt 161 East in exchange for a 50 year old ranch home. They were nearing their 77th birthdays and decided to give up the beautifully landscaped acre + yard they personally maintained to a one story home instead. They spent over 4 months fixing up the new home (giving back to their community purchasing local products and hiring subcontractors) and again landscaping another acre + yard. Only upon moving in, did they put their first home up for sale. That was January of 2008. As pristine as their home was it remained on the market until Feb 15th 2012. The last 4 years have been a nightmare for them.

Last spring my high school girlfriend wanted to make some structural improvements to her home on Raccoon Lake. Upon the advice of two different contractors it was recommended she tear down the old home and start anew. You can not imagine her surprise to learn last May 2011 her building permit was the first in 3 years for 'new' construction in our community. Southern IL has been hit time and time again with little recourse and nothing left to rely on. I submit to you that the closure of Murray Center (belovedly still known to our local community as Murray Children's Center) will be the final nail in the casket of Centralia, IL.

In this time of Recovery and our President's continued cheer "Yes, we can!" Please don't take all the hopes and dreams of this community away from them. Surely there has to be other budget cut alternatives. How do you choose to: Steal from Peter, to pay Paul?

Sincerely,

Karen (Burge) Chianakas

Centralia High School Class '73

March 4, 2012

Hello, My name is Cary Ann Hatfield, age 56, I am the sister and guardian of Jane age 59, a resident at Murray Developmental Center since 1964. Yes that's 48 years of residence at MDC, basically ever since the center has been opened.

When my parents were living and in charge of her well-being, they always fought for Jane to reside at Murray Center. My mother, Phyllis A. Hatfield was instrumental in developing the Murray Parents' Organization along with Anita Becherer of Belleville. The only permanent home my sister Jane has known is Murray Dev.Center...she likes it there, has never had any problems with staff in the 48 years of residency. Holding true to my parents' beliefs, and my experiences with this wonderful facility, I have always encouraged her residence to remain at MDC.

The Kaskaskia Workshop has given these residents a social life that cannot be matched by any other facility. Residents have been working in the community when appropriate for their capabilities.

The number of area residents and businesses that profit from these facilities employment opportunities is endless. MDC is one of the areas largest employers, how could you even think of destroying the homes and lives of our loved ones.

Centralia cannot withstand any more losses of jobs and well-being to survive in these tough economic times.

We have lost so much already, Valley Steel, Kas Potato Chip, Littlefuse, Inc, Rockwell, Intl, Illinois Bell Telephone Co., Economy Fire & Casualty, World Color Press, Salem & Mt. Vernon, & Illinois Central Railroad Shops.

Please save our homes, our developmentally disabled and our longevity as a community.

Thank you,
Cary A. Hatfield
618.532.4197

Hard for me to believe that you would close this Center. They need that center there in Centralia. Now when the economy is so bad it will just get worse by closing the center and people losing their jobs. There has to be lots of other places to get the money that is needed there.

Pls don't close it
Rosemary Wallace

I can't believe what I read! Are you taking away a much needed facility from my hometown? Centralia is my childhood home, which I love so much. Don't take jobs away from the people of this area. It is already a depressed area. Look somewhere else for the necessary cut in spending. How much waste is going on in Springfield and Chicago? Leave the little guys in southern Illinois alone. Don't close Murray Center.

Lucille Anne Heckel
337 Gregory Street
Aurora, IL 60504-2040

A dear friend of mine has a brother who has been a resident at Murray for well over 40 years. Even though it is a drive of nearly 4 hours for the family they have chosen to keep him there all these years because of the care he receives. It has been a wonderful place and he is happy there.

The plan to close the Murray Developmental Center is a problem because many people went to Murray as a child and have been there most of their lives. They stayed there because of the excellent care they received. They received the excellent care because, as a larger facility, it has consistent over-site by reviewing bodies such as public health. It also has been able to share resources such as staff, physical space and supplies. A small community based facility would not have these advantages and I believe that this change would be very inefficient for the State. Inefficiencies will result from having to employ far more people to provide monitoring for all of the small, community based facilities located throughout the state without providing the same level of care for the residents. Not to mention the trauma that will be inflicted on the residents and families when they have to move their loved ones from what has been their home for most of their lives.

I know that budgets are reduced and will continue to be reduced but looking for the largest budget line to cut isn't the answer. Yes, it takes a lot of money to keep Murray house running but splintering it isn't the answer either. Take another look at process improvements that could be implemented at Murray, take another look at how much it is going to cost you to manage the multiple sites it will take to replace it and then balance that with the needs of those who live there. I know I am not in your shoes and I know it must be a large undertaking but please do the right thing by the Murray residents.

Thank you for your time!

Angela Burris

This is going to take a few minutes, so I would ask that you clear your mind of distractions and prepare to give me your attention for about 20 or so minutes of your busy day.

With that being said, I'll get started. Quite frankly, I have so many conflicting emotions and so much to say that I am unsure of where to start. Have you heard the expression, "What do I have to lose?" Well, I pretty much have everything to lose, so I feel I must share exactly what's in my heart and on my mind, and hope I can appeal to your heart, your conscience, your humanity and to your sense of decency.

My name is Margie Barton. I've been an employee at Murray Center for over 29 years. For around the last 10 of those, I've been a Habilitation Program Coordinator. When I first entered Murray Center in 1984 as a scared 23 year old college graduate with my new diploma in my hand, I found myself in an unfamiliar community with people I'd never met. I wasn't sure I even wanted to meet any of them. I was uncomfortable and unprepared, and I intended to stay here only long enough to find something better. As you can see, that never happened. Murray Center sucked me in and grabbed hold of my heart. For all these years I've never even considered searching for any other job. If there's any truth to the old cliché that home is where the heart is, then this is my home. This is where I belong. These are the people I belong with.

Although my job is challenging and sometimes frustrating, I like it. And I love the people I work with. Each morning as I arrive to work, I walk through the halls of the building I work in. I'm greeted with hugs and smiles, and words of welcome. It warms my heart to be able to work with these very special people every day. I enjoy coaching and coaxing them to overcome behavioral obstacles, encouraging them to look at a situation in a different way, teaching them to adapt to whatever issue they're having to the extent they are capable. These men and women are important to me. They're a huge part of my life, and they make a difference to me. I'm pretty sure it's reciprocated.

Each person who lives at Murray Center has a story. Each one of them is already an individual. I find it offensive that our governor is hiring a team of experts (at a cost of nearly 1 million dollars!) to come evaluate the people who live at Murray simply to tell us they are individuals. We already know that!! And we know their stories. There is a bond between the people who live at Murray and the people who work at Murray. You may prefer that I use terms like 'staff' and 'residents'. In reality, we are all people – although some of us have been labeled by society as 'intellectually disabled', 'physically challenged' or 'behaviorally challenged'.

The people who work at Murray know the likes and dislikes of the people who live there. There are so many 16 hour days spent together that human bonding occurs quite naturally. We know what makes them laugh because we've spent time together being happy. We know what makes them cry because we've spent time together being sad. We know what makes them afraid because we've spent time together being scared and calming each others' fears. We've spent time together being anxious, angry, silly, emotional. We've spent time together grieving. We know what they like to eat because we've watched them (or assisted them) at many, many meals. We know how each person acts when they have a stomach ache, when they haven't had enough sleep, when they're worried or anxious. We can tell by the look in their eyes or the expression on their faces when something is wrong. We know them,

their history, what makes them tick. But more importantly, they know US. That 'history', that bond that exists between the people who live at Murray and the people who work at Murray cannot be replicated or replaced, no matter which home, in which town, or with which new ID Team. These are relationships among humans - relationships that are built over time. They are irreplaceable and they do not have a monetary value. Nor can any hired "expert" give any advice on how to provide that same, exact service/support/relationship! These important human relationships are at stake here. Wait a minute.... Aren't we the Department of "Human" Services? Shouldn't we be concerned about the "humans" in this process?

Because there is no simple way to tell you the stories of every person who lives in Murray Center who will be negatively impacted in the event they are forced to move from their homes, I will focus on just a handful of people. I want to share with you some of the reasons I support keeping Murray Center open. My reasons have names and social security numbers, and I want you to meet some of them. Although I am unable to use their names, please be assured these are real people, and I want to share parts of their unique stories. I want to provide you with some insight into their lives so you can make your decision and recommendations based on some actual and very real information.

Human Being #1 is a healthy young woman in her 20's with a history of severe aggressive behavior. She came to live at Murray around the time she turned 21 years old. She had been in a CILA and her aggression was so severe she seriously injured a staff person. During her stay at this 8 bed CILA, Human Being #1's own safety was compromised by the actions of one of her peers. Once she arrived at Murray, her psychotropic medication was adjusted to the lowest effective dose, her behavior became stable, and she met the established criteria for community placement. An appropriate 3 bed CILA, very near to her parents was located and Human Being #1 was eased into it by visiting on several occasions for 1 to 5 nights at a time prior to her move. Information was provided and exchanged between the agencies. However, after her discharge, the information Murray staff had provided became skewed, misplaced, lost, or perhaps it was just ignored altogether. Human Being #1's behavior deteriorated, and within 6 months she was asked to leave her new home and that agency. When she returned to Murray Center she was 60 lbs heavier and heavily medicated. In that CILA, she apparently could not stop being aggressive to her peers and to the staff, and the resources available to them were simply not adequate.

Police departments don't have the training or supports to deal with people like Human Being #1 who are being aggressive. What would they do? Use a tazer? Arrest her? That doesn't even make sense! With crime and terrorism being so real, do we actually want our police departments to use their limited resources to be dealing with issues like this? Issues that could be better addressed with a Behavior Intervention Plan carried out by trained staff in a place like Murray Center? Doesn't that make more sense? What happens if the person gets arrested? They get locked up and fined by the court? How are they going to pay a fine with limited personal monetary resources? Use their SSI benefits? Is that what SSI should be used for? It's taxpayer's support money, isn't it? Does that make any sense at all? After they pay a fine, then what? Does this solve anything? It sounds like a crazy situation, but in reality it does happen. I've seen it.

Another alternative is to seek help at the hospital emergency room. What can be done in an emergency room to stop aggressive behavior? Medication? That's not a good answer either. That's what community agencies have to rely on for assistance - because the community is not ready or equipped. In Human Being #1's history, she has injured people. While she lives at Murray, her parents are assured she is safe. They can also rest a little easier knowing she has a behavior plan that is followed consistently. There are supports in place, and a sufficient number of trained staff available at any given time to ensure Human Being #1 will not hurt anyone. Those same people also ensure no one hurts Human Being #1. How are community agencies staffed? Are there enough people available to actually intervene and prevent injuries? Are those people trained? Will those who earn minimum wage actually intervene at the risk of their own safety? Will they be around long enough to take the time to get to know Human Being #1 and be familiar enough with her to interpret her facial expressions or the look in her eyes? Will Human Being #1 end up in jail? Will she be tazed? Will she end up over-medicated? Will she end up far away from family and friends? Human Being #1 is a person. She's a citizen of Illinois. She has family. She has friends. She has a job. Murray Center, Kaskaskia Workshop, and Centralia are her community. Does anyone have the right to take that away from her?

Are you familiar with an agency called the Greywood Foundation? Remember the first death? Have you ever wondered what happened to some of those traumatized young men? Well, a few of them presently reside at Murray Center. I have no information about the experiences they've gone through other than the on-line newspaper articles I've read. From what I've gathered, those men who lived in that home routinely, yes, ROUTINELY, wrestled and beat on each other until one of them died. How very, very sad. I didn't know him, but I do know he was a person, a citizen of this state, and I'm 100% positive he did not deserve to die for lack of adequate supervision and well trained, quality staff. I realize that Greywood does not represent all community agencies, but even one death is too many. Yet, I believe there was another before that agency was shut down.

Human Being #2 is young, muscular, agile, and strong. He's around 6 feet tall, and he's just as cute as he can be. He also has severe Autism. Human Being #2's mother, his primary caregiver, passed away when he was only 10 years old and this very unique and special young man has been moved around to various towns and various programs ever since. We don't know of all the places he's lived and he can't tell us. Nor can he tell us what he's lived through. He did tell me once, "I was so scared at the hospital." This was a significant communication for Human Being #2, as his disability seldom allows him to put his thoughts together to make a meaningful statement. I have no details as to what scared him so badly, which hospital he's referring to, or what the circumstances were. All I could do was to reassure him he would be safe here, and I reassure him every day.

When Human Being #2 came to live at Murray Center, he was, for lack of better wording, a fighting machine. He bit, punched, kicked, and slapped. He spent hours in his bed, covered head to toe, shutting out the world. He distrusted EVERYONE. It's taken 2 years of gentle, consistent HUMANE supports, and Human Being #2 now blows kisses to the female staff who work with him daily. He is able to give and receive hugs. He is able to maintain eye contact briefly, and when he's happy he sings to himself as he works on his projects. He approaches people when he wants something instead of punching or kicking

those who come too close to him. He can be redirected and he's begun to seem more relaxed. He attends Special Education classes at the High School, and his quality of life is dramatically improved. Human Being #2 is near and dear to my heart because I can see the intelligence in his eyes. It's not his fault he's been given these challenges in his life. He deserves to have some stability. He deserves to feel safe. He deserves to be happy. He deserves to finish school. He deserves to not be jerked around. Please do not disrupt Human Being #2's life any more. For Human Being #2's sake, please let the pursuit of community placement unfold naturally to allow him the time he needs for adjustments. To do otherwise is unnecessary cruelty.

Human Being #3 lived at Greywood. He's physically big and strong, at 6'4 or so. He struggles with bullying and pouting. He has a short fuse, and quickly resorts to physical violence - toward staff, toward peers, toward property. When he is angry, he's very destructive - and he seems to be angry a lot. Human Being #3 has severe aggression in his history, and he is very capable of causing serious injuries to others. His behavior is a challenge even in this structured setting. Human Being #3 also has a lot of good qualities, but he's not ready to live in the community yet. Not at this point in his life. If his world can remain structured enough to keep him from reckless and dangerous behavior, he may eventually mature enough to outgrow some of his behaviors and some of that anger. But he's barely an adult, and maturity takes time. In the meantime, he needs to be kept safe and the people around him need to be kept safe. Human Being #3 needs the structure of Murray Center. Please allow him some time to grow up emotionally and reach a certain level of maturity before you force him back to the community where he's already been traumatized. Human Being #3 needs Murray Center and Human Being #3's family needs Murray Center.

Another young man I want to talk about is Human Being #4. Human Being #4 is in his early 20's, and came to Murray via the court system. He'd been living in a CILA until he assaulted a staff member with an object he used as a club. He was arrested, kicked out of his home, and jailed for 37 days. The court imposed a fine, and Human Being #4 was brought to live at Murray Center. Human Being #4 has ADHD. He's wiry, loud, bossy, unreasonable, impractical, and sometimes not redirect able. He's also polite, inventive, imaginative, and very sociable with an engaging smile. Human Being #4's very personality could make him an easy target for abuse or exploitation in an inadequately supervised setting. His father is a disabled single parent and is unable to provide a suitable home for Human Being #4. His family is only able to provide minimal supports for him. If he were to move further away, those supports would come to a complete stop. How is that in Human Being #4's best interest? Human Being #4 has been referred for placement and has actually met with several providers. To date there have been no invitations for him to visit. Community agencies do not have the resources or staffing numbers to adequately provide for persons like Human Being #4. That's why he's at Murray Center to start with! Without adequate supervision Human Being #4 could easily turn into a homeless person or be convicted of a crime. He needs guidance. He needs training. He needs supports. He needs Murray Center.

Human Being #5 is a spunky little 70 year old woman. Like a lot of people her age, she has a very rigid routine that she follows. Schedule deviations cause her stress and anxiety. Every day as long as I've known her, as Human Being #5 gets home from work, she finds me wherever I am in the building simply

to show me she has gum in her mouth. The gum was given to her to reward good behavior at work, and she's proud of it. I just love Human Being #5! She brightens my day. She doesn't tolerate anxiety well, and she will slap her own face so hard it's painful to witness. The solution to prevent her slapping herself? It's simple! Remove the reason she's upset and don't give her a reason to be anxious! Human Being #5 has had visits to provider agencies. And she doesn't do well. For weeks after an upset like that, she will intermittently slap herself. Human Being #5 has intellectual challenges, but she knows she's safe at Murray Center. She's comfortable with the people she lives with, and she's happy. She doesn't have the cognitive skills to understand that some expert somewhere, who has never met her, thinks she should live somewhere else because it's in her best interest. She simply doesn't care what the experts say. I fear she will not tolerate change well if her home is taken away from her. At age 70, does she really deserve to be uprooted from her home, her job, her friends, her routine, her familiar people, her Murray Center family? I think not! Doesn't she deserve to feel comfortable and safe and be happy? Doesn't she deserve some security, some respect? She's a senior citizen and she's made it evident to those who know her and care about her that she's happy. Our country was founded on the belief that all citizens are created equal and we all have the same inalienable rights - one of which is the right to happiness. Human Being #5 has her happiness right here at Murray Center.

When Human Being #6 came to Murray, she was quite simply, a mess. She was unable to function in any kind of normal way. She banged her head so severely with her knee that she still has a scar in the middle of her forehead. (Please don't mention it to her, as she is quite self-conscious about it.) Human Being #6 is a personable young woman with a complicated past. Initially she would sit on the floor under the table. She would absolutely not get into a vehicle, whether it was a car or bus. She wouldn't eat anything except pasta, and she weighed less than 90 lbs. Anything and everything was a stressor that triggered severe self injurious behavior and sometimes led to physical aggression. With gentle and consistent care and coaxing, the Murray staff worked diligently and eventually managed to build trust, implement some training, provide some therapy and drastically improve Human Being #6's quality of life. "It takes a village to raise a child." Human Being #6's family had been in such extreme crisis for so long - several years. Their 'village' just wasn't out there. They had sought help from many experts in many different cities. I don't even know all the places they drove to, all the hospitals they entered, all the doctors and therapists and experts they consulted. They simply could not get the help they needed until they came to Murray Center. This is where they found their 'village' - at Murray Center. There is no doubt in my mind that Murray Center saved their sanity and dramatically improved their lives. I saw the holes in the walls of the family home where Human Being #6 had beaten her head and forcefully thrown her body! Can you even imagine living that way, watching your child's behavior deteriorate to that degree, and not being able to find effective help? I cannot. Human Being #6's mother says she used to spend hours laying over Human Being #6 to prevent her from injuring herself further until Human Being #6 could eventually calm down. No one, and I mean NO ONE, should have to live like that!!! Human Being #6 and her family needed Murray Center. They still need Murray Center. If Murray Center is not available, who will be there to help the next Human Being #6? What if that next Human Being #6 is your daughter, your grand-daughter, your niece? That's a very compelling reason to keep Murray Center open far into the future!! You should meet Human Being #6 now. She's a changed young lady, and we're all very proud of her. Some day she will be ready to move to the community. Human Being #6

needs for that to happen naturally, as she becomes ready, as she develops confidence. Working through some issues, particularly unspoken, private issues that have been internalized simply takes time. I fear she'll regress if the process is rushed.

We have another young man, I'll call Human Being #7 who was removed from his parents' home by the court system. They could not find needed resources in their surrounding geographical (metropolitan) area either. As a last resort, he was apparently locked away. Human Being #7's parents are decent people who care deeply about him. While it sounds inhumane, this was another family in crisis who did not have the assistance and resources they needed. They did what they had to do to keep him as safe as possible. By the way, Human Being #7 is doing well at Murray. He has autism, pica, and elopement behaviors. It is very likely he would endanger himself unless the environment he lives in is closely supervised. Is Human Being #7's community ready for him? Are there supports in place? It's only been 2 years since he moved here and supports weren't available at that time - and he's from a large city in northern Illinois, where one would assume those supports are plentiful and easy to locate. Hmmmm....

Human Being #8 has lived at Murray Center for over 40 years. She's been here since the 1960's when the trend was to put children like her in a place like Murray. She grew up here and she is easing into "senior-hood" here. She has a fairly rare degenerative condition that has taken a toll on her health. She has never been able to adapt well to change. I'm not sure any of us adapt as well in our 50's and 60's as we did in our teens and 20's - and Human Being #8 had problems even then. Human Being #8 has seen a lot of changes in her lifetime at Murray. A lot of people she's loved through the years have come and gone, and she clings to those she still has in her life. She needs multiple reassurances throughout her day that she will be 'taken care of'. She needs to feel protected and secure. Her Murray Center family members are very important to her - at times more important than her biological family. Her Murray family is there when she's going to sleep at night. Her Murray family is there when she gets up in the morning. Her Murray family is there every weekend and every holiday. We're there when she's sad or happy or worried or sick. We were there when she grieved her mother's death. Human Being #8 craves those familiar bonds. She has attended the same workshop, KWI, for well over 25 years. KWI is good to all their clients, but Human Being #8's KWI family ensures she is treated like a queen. These staff members make special allowances for Human Being #8 during Christmas shutdown and some holidays. They go out of their way to keep her happy. Someone will give up a few minutes or a few hours on their day off simply to come in to work and allow Human Being #8 to spend at least a few minutes at "work" so her routine is not disrupted too severely. She's the only client who gets to come to work on those days. Human Being #8 is personable and special to so very many people! She's somewhat of a local legend. Of course, the people who have known her for years and years also know she's likely to hit or slap herself, throw herself to the floor, strip naked, curse, and bang her head when she's upset. Human Being #8 has medical issues and sees several specialists. She has only 1 kidney, having lost the other years ago after suffering a medical emergency related to her condition. Human Being #8 is most assuredly pampered and spoiled, and the services provided for her are about as "individualized" as it gets anywhere! I fear for her health if her life is disrupted. She has the right to be happy exactly where she is and with the people she loves. The stress related to a move away from her home, her work, her Murray family and her KWI family could very well cost her life. And that would be a tragedy.

Although I could tell you many more stories about the citizens of Illinois who live at Murray Center, I will provide one last story about a young man who lived here briefly in 2011. His story haunts me, although I'm certain he is loved at his new home.

Human Being #9 was 2 days past his 18th birthday when he was brought to Murray Center by staff from Streamwood Hospital. He'd been with them for 45 or so days, with this actually having been the second time he'd been admitted to that hospital. In Human Being #9's history, his family consisted of a single father and a grandmother. Human Being #9's father tried to send him to school but the school didn't really want him. Of course, he was likely a financial burden for a small struggling school district with limited resources. Human Being #9 engaged in aggressive behavior almost daily at school, and that caused him to be sent home. Human Being #9's father was unable to work because he couldn't find any help with his son. He couldn't leave him anywhere and had to keep him by his side. He tried to find resources without success. In desperation, the man even went so far as to take the boy to the local hospital emergency room and left him. That move backfired for him. The staff at the hospital called the police and threatened to have him arrested for abandonment. This family was in crisis and had no available community resources. Eventually, Human Being #9 injured his grandmother, rather severely and he was taken to Streamwood. Then he came to live at Murray. Human Being #9's only psychiatric diagnosis was autism. He was on several medications when he arrived. During his 6 month stay at Murray, we were able to adjust medications and discontinue some of them. If we'd had more time, I'm certain we could have reduced his meds further. We enrolled him in the Special Education classes at our high school, and Human Being #9 thrived! He so enjoyed going to school. He was so proud of himself. His ID Team felt very strongly that Human Being #9 deserved the opportunity to stay in school. After all, he'd missed so much already, what with having been sent home daily. Human Being #9's teacher reported how Human Being #9 would initiate the various daily routines in imitation of the teacher. You could tell by his body language that Human Being #9 was happy and he was proud of his accomplishments. It was heartwarming to see how well Human Being #9 was doing compared to what we knew of his history.

Well, SST was involved in this admission, and a provider was found. Staff at the new agency fell in love with Human Being #9, and he was quickly discharged without regard for his education or any other recommendation from Murray staff. At follow up visits, we saw Human Being #9 at his day program. He sat at a table in a big crowded room with his head down on the table. He had a notebook with him and he'd written his name on a few pages. The staff ratio in the room was probably 2:20 or so, and it was evident by the expression on Human Being #9's face that he wasn't having any fun. At 18 years old, he was most certainly the youngest person there. It was heartbreaking for me. Community placement is supposed to be better for the individual. It's supposed to meet their needs "better". Well, it certainly didn't look that way to me, and I'm not really sure Human Being #9 was convinced of it either. We saw Human Being #9 blossom and thrive at Murray. Then he moved to an agency where he had no one that would advocate for him to attend school in spite of him still being eligible for educational services. The 8 bed CILA that was determined to be appropriate for him by SST staff and his PAS agent is a home where Human Being #9 is the youngest person there. He lives in a home where his housemates are

several bossy women who are 2-3 decades older than he is. He attends a day program where he's bored and unhappy. It just doesn't seem fair to Human Being #9. And it isn't right. In my heart, I believe Human Being #9's happiness was sacrificed. I believe he was pushed out of our SODC and rushed to the first community placement located without regard to whether or not it was the best "fit".

I could go on and on and on to tell you stories about specific individuals who have passed through Murray Center, some briefly and some for a longer period of time. I could tell you success stories where we've assisted people to develop their personal potential and they were able to move to a community setting. I could also tell you additional stories of people who have suffered traumatic experiences in the name of community placement. If you want more information, please contact me and I'll go on. There are so many more stories to tell.

The point of sharing these stories is simply to relate to you that Murray Center IS important. Community alternatives are not always appropriate because many communities, even large metropolitan areas, are simply not ready to absorb those who have special needs. We provide vital services to people in need, to families in crisis. Our SODC is not the same "institution" of the past. Murray Center never was one of those places where anything like the horror stories of old have occurred. Through the years, as society has changed and adapted, so have the services at Murray. The people who live in Murray Center are important to those who work there and vice versa. We are not simply "staff", "residents", "co-workers", "peers". We are family and our lives are intertwined. Our relationships are important. They are real. How can anyone put a monetary value on that?

Do you realize how many lives will be directly affected if Murray Center is closed? 275 plus 547. That equals 822. If you consider each of those persons having only one significant person in their life, that makes it 1,644 people who will sharply feel the displacement. If only half the employees have one additional person in their lives, that is an additional 273 people. By my crude and very simplistic calculations, an extremely low and rough estimate of very nearly 2,000 citizens will literally have their lives turned upside down.

The population of this town is roughly 20,000 people if you include the attached villages. A whopping 10% of our population will feel a significant, direct impact from the decision to close Murray Center!! That is simply unacceptable. I cannot even fathom how the rippling effect will be felt.

I have not even touched on the subject of how our Center provides learning opportunities for students. Students completing nursing programs, behavior analysis programs, child care programs, activity therapy programs, and social worker programs have all spent time at Murray, observing, interacting, and learning things that can't be learned elsewhere. Murray provides opportunities for people who wish to volunteer. High school students and college athletes who volunteer at Murray are forever influenced by their experiences. You simply cannot assign a monetary value on that.

Murray Center is the only SODC in the state who can tout the fact that we make money. We make money and return it to the general revenue of the state! Is that not significant?? It sounds as if cost of

operations isn't really a factor in this decision. The quality of our services isn't really a factor either. We have always had good results from Public Health Surveys. We have never had cause for the Department of Justice to enter our doors. We have never needed Equip for Equality to open a case here. So what is the point? Why close it? I'm afraid I just don't see anything rational about it. I fail to see a reasonable justification for uprooting the lives of 2,000 people.

I certainly hope you realize that people do not come to live at Murray Center because it's a goal of theirs. Parents don't line up to bring their children to Murray eagerly hoping to get a bed. This is never their first choice. Rather, it is their last resort. People come to live at Murray because they cannot find adequate services elsewhere. They come because they have no choice. However, they stay because they DO have a choice. And they've chosen Murray Center.

Often, the parents who must leave a child of any age at Murray are also traumatized, sometimes more so than their (usually adult) child who needs the care, treatment, intervention, and supports. Some people come to live at Murray after suffering a debilitating illness or a life altering accident. The stories are varied. None of these people, residents or their parents and family members, have asked to be in the position they are in. Fate and circumstance has already burdened them with difficult situations and extreme challenges. It is merely by the grace of God that each of us has not had to make the difficult decision those parents have had to make. It is by the grace of God that we have not found ourselves in the position to be a benefactor of services such as those Murray provides. What would you do if you were? How would you feel? Where would you go? Think about it. Does anyone really have the right to toy with these people's lives, with their homes, with their jobs, with their relationships? It's a pretty sad day if the answer to that is yes.

At Murray Center we provide quality services for citizens who face difficult issues. We do what we do, and we do it well. We meet the challenges we are faced with. We adapt to changes. And we manage to somehow achieve seemingly impossible goals. We're proud of what we do, and we get to work with some amazing and awesome people as we do it (some who live at Murray and some who work at Murray). Please allow us to keep doing what we do. People's lives most certainly do depend on it.

Sincerely,

Margie Barton
469 Racetrack Road
Centralia, IL 62801

To Whom It May Concern,

As a native of and frequent visitor to Centralia, I respectfully ask you to reconsider the proposal to close Murray Children's Center. While I am aware of the tremendous budget problems of the State of Illinois at this time, please consider closing another center in an area with a stronger overall economy. The people and economy of Centralia are not in the position to handle such a serious blow to the local economy. Closing of this facility would be truly devastating to Centralia and the surrounding area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Scott J. Smith
Arlington, MA

We oppose closing the Warren G. Murray Development Center in Centrailia IL. We don't have any relatives living in or working at the Murray Center but we do have an awareness for what that center has done for local citizens. I've heard workers describe their rewards for working there as their encounters with the residents have warmed their hearts over and over. The residents become attached to their caregivers.

As a recent article in the Centralia Sentinal states, "The residents are comfortable, safe and secure in their familiarity with their surroundings and with the loving people who provide them care. The Murray Center is not a warehouse for these people - it is their home. For many of the residents at the center, consistency in surrounds and routine is essential to their care. Even the slightest changes in either can often be the cause of physical and psychological setbacks that can place both the resident and others at harm."

It will look nice to see the costs of maintaining that center not appear as an expenditure in the Illinois budget but what would be the real monetary costs of closing the center? Opening up residential homes to house these folks and providing the staff to care for them (which wouldn't be close to what most of the residents would require to live safely) would be a big outlay of money, which wouldn't show up in the same bookkeeping manner. It would cost a lot more than keeping the Murray Center open as it is. The ratio of caregiver to resident would not be adequate enough to maintain the serenity and routine necessary for these residents.

How could you live with your conscience in the awful wake a decision to close the Center would make? The folks that worked hard to get the Murray Center established saw the need for it vs residential homes; they worked hard to get our citizens the care they needed to keep them and the communities safe. We do not need to step backwards.

Also mentioned in that Sentinel article of Feb 26, 2012, is the fact that "From a financial standpoint, the center brings in between \$10 million-\$11 million each year, while other facilities cost the state money to operate."

There are many other areas where IL can cut funds. If you want, I can go into a tirade about the waste of the IL DNR granting \$125,000 to Carlyle IL for a sports field. A sports field for the declining numbers of children playing soccer and baseball. Look at the overall picture, people. Our community needs a Center like the Murray Center much, much more than a sports field.

Why is IL doling out grants for niceties in life vs supporting necessities in life? Please reconsider closing the Warren G. Murray Development Center in Centralia IL. Keep it open; protect our citizens; provide a secure and safe environment for the residents.

Jean Van Dorn

First of all, I retired from state service on December 31, 2008, after working at Murray Developmental Center for almost thirty five years. During those thirty five years, I saw many operational/political changes made at the Center, some were good and some were not. Being a nursing supervisor/residential manager/training coordinator/quality assurance director, I was responsible for a residential building 24/7 for many years. I "lived" the Murray Center experience up close and personal, therefore I can speak to the following issues with some degree of credibility.

1. The individuals who lived/are living at Murray Center receive exceptional care from the direct service personnel (DSP) who care for them every day. These DSP staff are well trained and committed to providing the best care possible, given the resources that are available to them at any given point in time. As the Center's Training Coordinator for over five years, I was/am very familiar with the required training curriculum that all DSPs are required to complete successfully. This group of care givers really do "care" about the individuals they serve every day! They are the "eyes and ears" for the other clinical staff employed at Murray Center.

2. The professional/clinical staff, who work at Murray Center, are among the very best in the state's SODC system. Where else can you find registered pharmacists that are thoroughly familiar with the use of psychotropic and antiepileptic medication with individuals who have multiple behavioral and neurological issues.....nowhere! Other dedicated and competent professional staff at Murray include a licensed occupational therapist, a registered physical therapist, a "busy" activity therapy department, and a multitude of Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMRPs), from a variety of professional disciplines, who routinely ensure that Individual Habilitation Plans (ISPs) are carried out correctly and consistently. Murray Center's social service staff diligently strive to meet the needs of the individuals living at the Center, as well as the needs of their families. All of these staff members were my colleagues for many years and they are good at what they do!

3. Also, I want to speak about the level of health care provided at Murray Center. The current medical director has exemplary credentials and has provided excellent oversight for the staff physicians on staff for over 15 years. He is not only a competent physician but also a compassionate man, a personality

trait that cannot be measured objectively. Along that same line, the professional nursing staff at Murray Center could very easily be considered that best in the SODC system today. It takes astute observational skills to assess an individual who cannot speak or otherwise communicate his/her feelings/wants/needs. The Murray Center nurses accomplish this task over and over day in and day out, thereby creating many positive outcomes for the individuals they care for. It must be noted that many of the individuals living in Murray Center have far out lived their life anticipated expectancy due to the excellent health care they receive. Where else in southern Illinois could a developmentally disabled person receive this level of care? In the community, I think not!!!!

4. Even though Murray Center was built/occupied in 1964, the physical plant has been well maintained over the years, with numerous renovations/life safety code improvements. Both the engineering and support service staff have done an excellent job of maintaining the Center's buildings/grounds, frequently with limited monetary resources. Life safety code violations at the Center, over the years, have been minimal and "fixable".

Additionally, I would take this opportunity to remind you that Murray Center is the only SODC in the SODC system that generates enough federal reimbursement dollars to offset it's operational expenses!!!! Was that fact considered when the decision was made to close Murray Center?

Considering the state's dismal financial situation, I fail to see the wisdom in closing Murray Center (with it's black ink) and leaving other SODC's open that have received multiple state and federal deficiencies over the years. These "other"centers (with their red ink) have actually cost DHS millions of dollars in the past and will almost certainly continue to do so in the future. Was this overall picture considered when the decision was made to close Murray Center? If it wasn't given serious consideration, it certainly should have been! As an Illinois tax payer and consistent independent voter, I expect my tax dollars to be used wisely. Hidden agendas are unethical and absolutely unacceptable to me.

In closing, I must not forget to mention the subjective impact the closing of Murray Center will have on the individuals who live there, the staff who work there and the community of Centralia as a whole. Most of the individuals who will be slated for transition out of the Center , will not be able to understand the rationale for their moving. They will just know that they are being uprooted from their home, separated from staff that they have come to know as "family" and moved into a new and frightening environment. They will be very apprehensive and afraid. Putting developmentally disabled individuals in this type of situation almost always precipitates maladaptive behavior and a regression in self care skills. It is possible, if not probable, that the care these individuals will receive away from Murray may not compare favorably. Will they survive the transition, most will but a few may not! Another thing, please consider the input that you receive from the Murray Parent's Association(MPA). This organization has represented the individuals who have lived at the Center for many many years. The MPA has maintained a positive presence in Springfield for as long as I can remember. This group of concerned parents and friends have supported their loved ones at Murray Center both emotionally and financially. They deserve your attention and respect. Listen to them!

Now, let me briefly speak about the Murray Center staff who will lose their income source if the Center closes. This closure will be devastating to many of them because of the depressed economic climate in southern Illinois. Decent jobs are a rare commodity in this part of the state and very hard to find. Local businesses will suffer, as a result of this huge loss of jobs within the community. Public assistance rolls will almost certainly increase, which will mean more expense for the state. Not a good thing at all. Centralia needs more jobs, not less!

I realize that change does not come easy for most people, especially change that has no obvious rational basis. Therefore, I am asking that you read this communication with an open mind. Feel free to confirm some of the situations that I have referenced. That should be easy enough to do. Then, I feel that you will reach the same conclusion that I did....it will be in everyone's best interest to keep Murray Center open! Many lives/livelihoods will depend on your decision/recommendations

Sincerely,

Pat Garren, MSN, BSN
17753 N Fairdrive
Woodlawn, IL 62898

requesting that
I send an email (I assume it is going to Governor Quinn) to
reconsider the State of IL budgetary cuts which effectively
would close Murray (Children's) Center.

year: Centralia High School
Class of '1973

Tee Burris

Please reconsider closing Murray Center.

Thank you,

Nova Ferrington
Zephyrhills, FL.

My name is Richard Chadeayne. I live in Millstadt, Illinois about 100 miles south of Springfield, Illinois. My daughter, Suzie has been a resident since 1977 at the Murray Children's Center in Centralia Illinois which is approximately fifty miles from Millstadt. When she was sixteen years old she was in a serious car accident and suffered severe permanent brain damage. The care she has received at Murray has been incredible. The staff has cared and treated her as if she was their own child or sibling. I am seventy four years old and have never missed a week going to visit her. When I leave there I am at peace and assured that she will be well taken care until I see her the next week. I've talked to many medical personnel and other families and they as confident as I am that Suzie and the other residents would not have the degree of care they have now at a group home that Governor Quinn is proposing they be sent to by closing Murray Center.

She is totally dependent on others for her care. She cannot walk or talk and must be fed and diapered. She is completely unable to communicate with anyone. She can sit in a chair and I am sure she knows who I am because of the grin she always has for me. She is depending on me and now as a citizen of these United States and a taxpayer in the State of Illinois I need you.

Please convince Governor Quinn to change his mind in closing Murray Center in Centralia.

Richard Chadeayne

To: Commision on Government Forcecasting and Accountability,

We understand the Governor is recommending the closing of the Warren G. Murray Development Center at Centralia, IL. We are appealing to the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability to please not approve this request by the Governor, to take away the home of 270 developmentally and physically handicapped individuals.

Our 52 year old daughter Kimberly Williams, has been a resident of Murray Center for 46 years. She is confined to a wheel chair with severe developmentally and physical disabilities which include; severe osteoporosis. Her wheel chair has been modified to accomodate her disabled body, through the services the Murray Center provides on campus.

We have visited other community placements, however, none of these communities can meet the needs of the individual resident the way Murray Development Center has over the years.

Once again, we are asking to please not take away the home of these desiabled residents.

Sincerely,

Orval & Dorothy Williams
1009 W. Boulevard St.
Marion, IL. 62959

I am writing in opposition of the closure of Murray Center. These residents have been living here for most of their lives. We are talking 30 to 40 years. We as employees of Murray Center have gone without raises, working a tremendous amount of overtime only to have the mental cruelty of the announcement of closing the facility placed upon us. Please reconsider this devastating proposal.

Respectfully,

Pat Blake RN 2
Murray Center
1535 West McCord St.
Centralia, IL 62801

I am a concerned citizen and an opponent. Closing Murray Center would be devastating both to their clients and our city. Why does our Governor choose to deprive the handicapped, but give raises to his fellow government officials.....

--

Judy Griffin
Coldwell Banker Allen & Geary Real Estate

REASONS MURRAY CENTER SHOULD NOT CLOSE:

First, only a small percentage of the population (275) of Murray Center would be able to be placed in a CILA or group home. A very large part of the population is either very medically challenged or behaviorally challenged, making their candidacy for a CILA or group home next to impossible. These facilities simply don't have the staff numbers required to effectively care for these types of individuals. These individuals live at Murray Center because there are no other options for most of them. The only other option would be to move them to another state-operated developmental center, with the closest one being 1 ½ to 2 hours away. The frequency of family visits would most likely decrease, as family members would not be able to accomplish the travel involved. Many times, it is these family visits that keep the individuals positive, and they look forward to them. The Murray Parents' Association is very active and involved in their lives, providing support and extras that they would not otherwise have.

Secondly, of our Murray Center population, 68 individuals have lived at Murray Center for 40+ years, 31 individuals for 30+ years, 48 individuals for 20+ years, 47 for 10+ years, with the remaining 81 individuals having lived at Murray Center for less than 10 years. The maximum residency is 47.5 years, with the average residency being 24.5 years. As you can see from these numbers, Murray Center has been the home of these individuals' for many years, and some of them for most of their lifetime.

Transitioning these individuals would be difficult, as small changes often become big obstacles for them. Imagine how difficult it would be for them to be transferred out of the home they know, where they feel safe and comfortable with the trained staff that have cared for them daily for years.

Another very important reason is the negative economic impact the closure of Murray Center would have on Centralia and the nearby communities. Employing roughly 550, Murray Center is the third largest employer in an already economically fractured area. At last check, Marion County 's unemployment was 11%, and 9% in the four county area. I can speak from personal experience, as my husband has been laid off since January 1, 2012, and had been laid off for 3-4 months in 2010. It is hard enough to find employment at the age of 56 in any area, even more so in our area. Relocating is not an option for us with our aging parents in the area. I can only imagine what the unemployment number will climb to following the closure of a large employer like Murray Center. Businesses, schools, churches, and services of all kinds would be negatively affected. Many would not survive. Another population affected by Murray Center's closure and the economic decline of the area is the youth. How can they possibly build a life here? There will be no jobs, no services, declining school systems, etc. There would be nothing to draw them here or keep them here.

For these reasons, I feel Murray Center must not close. People's lives depend on it. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Lueking
116 S. Oak Street
Hoffman, IL 62250

yes i too worked at murray center as a teenager in a worked study program - to help put me through college

please do not close this important center - for surly centralia will just be doom .

Kim Burris

March 7,2012

Dear Sir/Madam:

We were devastated after hearing the news about closing plans for murray Developmental Center. Our son who is a resident of Murray Center for the last 15 years, has severe autism with behavior disorders. He was staying home till he was 21 years and then was tried and evaluated for community homes but he was not considered candidate for community living. He also has history of generalized seizures. He is aggressive at times and has self injury behavior. He requires 24 hour care/attention. We do not believe he can get that type of care in community homes. Even though there were some improvements in his condition since he came to Murray Center, he is far away from a state to walk out of the facility. When he visits home occasionally two of us have to stay with him as one could not manage. We are very upset worrying about the future of our son. He is in a safe environment at present, with uncertain future ahead. We know majority of residents in Murray Center are in similar situation.

We are aware of financial crisis the state is in, but closing the facility will put the residents in jeopardy. We request the commission to recommend to abandon the planned closure, till sufficient arrangements are available in community for the placement of residents. Especially with the closure plan of Jacksonville center the community resources will be overwhelmed and closing another facility will be a disaster.

We may be in the bottom of list for priority for the state, but think about all the helpless residents who can only dream and hope but cannot communicate or vote. Have a heart!

M. Ravindranathan MD
Indiradevi Ravindranathan
1505. N. Smith, IL 62959

First of all, please understand that difficult times have already begun since the announcement of possibly closing Murray Center. With this news, families' lives have been turned upside down, not a good way to boost the economy Governor Quinn.

Unfortunately, that is the material end of the whole deal; the sad part is they are playing with people's lives. The lives of residents that are not able to defend themselves and need to be cared for in more than what a community setting can provide. The residents at Murray did not do anything to deserve this, they are innocent and the budget should not be balanced at their expense. They are human beings, just like you and me, what makes them special is they need someone trained to take care of them 24/7 and that is where Murray Center comes in.

Putting your child, brother, sister, cousin or relative in any facility has to be one of the hardest things you may ever have to do in your life. Knowing they are going to be properly cared for, being able to see them progress, to see them happy and to have a place they can call home where you can visit which gives you peace of mind makes it easier.

This is what the residents at Murray Center have....how can you take this away from them? Is it really fair to the 275 residents and their families, to the 550 employees to say this facility has to close because it's costing the state too much but yet the Governor and Legislators received raises? This shouldn't be a political game, these are peoples' lives and I wish you could feel some of the pain and see just how a closure announcement can put your life on hold, not knowing what to plan on or where your child is going to end up. Please walk a mile in those shoes, not just for a month but for months.

It's really hard to understand this can be a cost saving measure for the state by closing a facility like when you calculate the federal reimbursement Murray receives. The residents will still require special care and cost from the state if Murray center is closed, why not let them be happy in a place they have called home for so many years? Also, the transition of the residents will need to be added into the cost of the whole process, and that is if it's even possible. The employees will either have to receive unemployment, public assistance, transfer to another state position (if anything is even available) or try to find a job in a dead economy so basically the cost of 550 employees losing their job will be falling back to the State of Illinois, just another expense, no savings!

Please consider what a loss it would be to the residents, their families, the employees, Centralia and the surrounding communities and to the State of Illinois if Murray Center would be closed. The outcome is something that will always be remembered by all because it affects so many lives!

Thank you for your time,

Shelly Seelhofer

3/8/12

My name is Cory Knapp. I'm a life-long Illinois resident and have a passion for helping folks. I've been working with developmentally disabled (DD) adults for over 15 years. During six of those years, I provided direct care in a sheltered workshop, and with community integration - helping more independent individuals access the community and develop life skills in their own homes. I then became a registered nurse and began service in a managerial role. I have been in management and administration - both working for a community provider, and recent years, for a state operated facility.

Given the obvious push to dissolve state operated facilities, I would like to share my unique first-hand perspective in effort to ensure these Illinois residents receive their entitled care.

I am a strong supporter of community based services. I have experience with Community integrated Living Arrangements (CILA) and see that as the ultimate goal for the majority of the DD population in Illinois. I know that currently, the CILA model is structured as a stepping stone to greater independence. Not to disapprove of that approach, but I feel in most cases, this is a more permanent setting, in which they can continue to achieve greater things. Again, I see this as the most community integrated, yet properly supported environment for our folks. There are other, more restrictive, "community" options available, but I feel they lose sight of the true vision of integration. That being said, CILAs are in need of financial attention to help provide realistic staff ratios and nursing services. This is especially true if they will be expected to provide care for the more severely handicapped and/or medically compromised individuals. The biggest obstacle facing CILA placement is individuals with mental illness. If residents display abusive behavior or have elopement issues, it is nearly impossible under the current system to manage their care appropriately in a CILA setting. These individuals would still require a more restrictive environment.

I understand and support the notion of closing state operated developmental centers (SODCs). As a taxpayer, I understand that cost is an issue. However, there are certain individuals that will only be fully served in such settings. Forcing these individuals into the community will create much more problems all around & will not be of benefit to anyone, including taxpayers.

Rather than squeezing individuals out of the SODCs, look closely at the facilities to examine their payroll and ways to consolidate jobs without significant impact on resident care. Also consider investing in better technology to reduce the overall cost of operations. I propose that individuals residing in SODCs be "grandfathered" in to the system. They should not be forced into the community. Many of these folks have grown up in these facilities; have made them their home, and will never be a good fit for community placement. I do believe that each individual be looked at specifically & their needs should be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Moving forward, SODCs should be a "last resort" option for permanent living. Also, each SODC should be required to have a "transition unit" to house residents with the potential of moving to a less restrictive environment. This would include a specific set of rules & regulations for that living area that would be much less restrictive. This would offer more freedom of choice, but would also increase inherent risks. It would need to be understood by the facility and

surveyors (governing bodies) that these risks are a part of independent living, even at an SODC. Also, SODCs should be consolidated at much as possible. I know the blueprint set forth in 2008 called for 5 of the 9 SODCs to close by 2014. I'm not sure how realistic that is. Hopefully the task team has identified various locations throughout the state, offering residents some options to be closer to family. With these location selections - past performance, facility functionality, overall structure, and maintenance issues should be considered as well.

MURRAY CENTER

I've been working at Murray Developmental Center (MDC) for the past 2 years. The vast majority of residents will not have their needs fully met in a community setting. Moreover, I understand that MDC operates in the black. If that is the case, why would the state even consider closing a facility that does not cost money to operate?

I would be happy to meet and discuss these issues with anyone willing to listen.
Your time and attention is appreciated.

Sincerely,
Cory Knapp, RN, PSA, QMRP

Home address:
211 N. 2nd St.
Breese, IL 62230

This letter is in opposition to Governor Quinn's proposed closing of Murray Center in Centralia, IL.

I have been a speech-language pathologist at Murray Center for 22 years. My responsibilities are to specifically address the very specialized communication, sensory, learning, and swallowing challenges faced by the individuals I support.

According to Murray Center records, 68 individuals have lived at Murray Center for 40 or more years and 99 individuals have lived here for 30 or more years. Of the 275 individuals currently supported at Murray Center, 53% have lived at the Center for over 20 years. They are citizens of Centralia. Families and guardians entrusted Murray Center with the care of their loved one those many years ago and Murray Center has upheld their expectation. If a safe, comparable alternative would have been available in the community, parent/guardians have stated they would have pursued placement. Should Governor Quinn proceed with the closure of this Center, some lifelong Centralia residents will be forced to move to either Anna, IL, (98 miles from Centralia) or Kankakee, IL, (213 miles from Centralia) in order to receive comparable level of State care.

Murray Center is able to hire and maintain a stable workforce due to the salary and benefits offered. It is this longevity and continuity of care that has proven to be one of the best tools in stabilizing individuals' severe maladaptive behaviors. Murray Center serves as a safety net for individuals who have been living in community settings but for various reasons were unable to be adequately supported there. In case after case, individuals thrive living at Murray Center following numerous attempts to reside in community alternatives. Murray Center is able to provide a safe, secure environment through establishing a predictable routine, continuity of care, and excellent medical and therapeutic interventions. Murray Center individuals are never placed in jail or a psychiatric ward for exhibiting behavioral outburst though Murray Center does admit individuals wrongly placed there. If Murray Center was no longer here, where would individuals living in this region go in order to receive the medical and behavioral care needed to support them in preparation to return to the community? Anna? Kankakee? Chicago?

Murray Center is at the hub of the community of Centralia. Individuals are not isolated within the walls. The people who live at the Center are active participants in work, church, sports, local festivals, shopping, and cultural events. Because ours is a small community, individuals are known and welcomed as part of the community. A recent example is when three individuals from Murray Center attended a volleyball game at a local school. The individuals enjoyed the game but especially enjoyed visiting with teenagers and adults they had previously established relationships with through the volunteer program, church services, and Kaskaskia College. Governor Quinn stated the need for individuals to be "active" in the local community. What he wants for these individuals, they already have! Murray Center is small town Illinois living. The Center and individuals who live here have been embraced by the community. Centralia isn't Centralia without Murray Center. Save Murray Center for the sake of the individuals who call it home.

Celeste Stratemeyer,
2 Magnolia Drive
Centralia, IL 62801

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing the State of Illinois today to **STRONGLY OPPOSE** the proposed closing of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. My friend, Mark Winkeler, is a resident who has lived there for 16 years.

It would put an extreme hardship on him and his family if Murray Center closed. His parents, like the parents of so many residents, are active members of the parents group Murray Parents Association. We know that Mark is safe at Murray Center, where they have round the clock medical staff available to care for him. This center also enables him to go home and visit his parents and have field trips in the community that increases his quality of life. This is a life that he would not be able to enjoy living in a nursing home or another facility far away from the family that loves him.

We are all heartbroken at the idea of closing this valuable institution that does so much good for its residents. Murray Center also employs many caring, hardworking individuals. Closing the center would not only harm Mark and his family, but it would also put many people out of work in a recession.

As a citizen and a taxpayer, I find it appalling that our lawmakers and governor can even consider closing Murray Developmental Center.

We morally have a special obligation to care for those who cannot care for themselves. We cannot allow our lawmakers to balance our budget at the expense of the disabled.

Sincerely,
Baize Buzan

I am appalled to learn that Murray Center a premier healthcare and home to many handicapped children and young adults in Centralia IL. This facility has been crucial to the quality of life for impaired children and many families have moved to the area in order to have their children and young adults cared for appropriately. The facility is also the largest employer in the county and many families have dedicated their summer, free time, dollars, medical care, christmas gifts, as well as their careers to caring for these less fortunate individuals. My uncle was Chief of staff at the facility for several years and spent hundreds of hours providing quality care for the patients as well as maintaining an exceptional clinic and healthcare for this weakened people.

Also it seems that the WATCH Program has been targeted for closing also. Do you realize that the WATCH center has provided job opportunities for many handicapped adults who have been able to learn job skills inspire of their handicaps and contribute to the community? These individuals are prodigy of learning and living in the Murray Center who were eventually prepared for assisted living, taught job skills with appropriate modifications and became successful members of society in spite of their handicaps.

You have targeted a suffering community which has lost much of it's industry, and threatened handicapped children and young adults, as well as the families of the handicapped who have depended on the Center to prepare their children for survival and accomplishment that will last after their families are unable to care for them. Without these two institutions, which have strengthen this community and it's population for over 40 years, the community will become a ghost town. Southern IL is a beautiful and wonderful culture that prioritizes taking care of it's residents as well as those that come looking for a place for development and/or care of the least able to take care of themselves.

Having graduated from Centralia HS in 1973 I have a deep respect for all that has been accomplished at Murray Center and the wonderful families and community members who contribute to the care of it's residents. It is very personal to those of us who are proud of the community for all it has done for the

"weak and damaged". Please reconsider your proposal to remove the residents, families and employees from this community.

Sincerely,

Nancy Stedelin-Todd
Centralia HS Clss of 1973

The residents of Murray Center deserve to have their lifelong home remain open and continue to receive the care and services that are provided. The citizens and economy of Marion, Clinton and surrounding counties rely on this facility to provide employment and economic value. It would be extremely devastating to everyone if this facility is closed. Please reconsider the Governor's decision to close Murray Center and make the right, humane choice to continue to provide the appropriate care for Illinois citizens who cannot provide for themselves.

Thank you!

Darlene Lohman

Closing Murray Center and the Animal Disease lab in Centralia, Il would be devastating to Centralia and many surrounding communities. We have been inundated with factories closing and the economic fall out has been great. To lose Murray Center and the Animal Lab would doom this area. Please look and alternative measures

Thank You
Carolyn Seats
P O Box 476
Sandoval, Il 62882

Please DO NOT close the Murray Developmental Center- it would put residents in a terrible situation and also put good workers out of jobs.

Carolyn McCall

To: the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

My name is JoAnn Pingsterhaus, and I have been employed at Murray Dev. Center for about 24 years. I'm writing to express my opposition to the proposed closure of this wonderful place. I would like this written testimony to be filed with the other public comments, and would also like to give oral testimony at the CGFA hearing.

I'm not exactly sure where to start with trying to put all my thoughts on this matter into a letter form. I guess it's because I, like the entire Southern Illinois region, am so outraged by Gov. Quinn's proposed closure. Someone once said that there is a difference between ignorance and stupidity. Ignorance is defined as the lack of knowledge, or simply not knowing any better. Stupidity is knowing better, and doing the same thing twice yet expecting a different outcome. Has the Gov. not learned anything from the closure of Lincoln Dev. Center? 26 of its former residents died after being forced to move to less suitable settings. Why then, is he expecting a different outcome with the closure of Murray Center? Is he suggesting that we do the same thing, yet expect a different outcome? Hmm... He can't really claim ignorance, when the entire Southern Illinois region is trying to educate him on the harmful effects that this closure brings to these people.

I started working at Murray Center when I was 18 years old, and very naive. Within weeks of completing my required training, I was placed on a cottage where my eyes quickly became open to the reality that people with profound disabilities were being helped to reach their fullest potential in life. This was not your stereotypical "institution" where I thought people would be wearing straight jackets and placed in padded rooms all day long. But quite the contrary, this is a home, a refuge for people with disabilities to feel safe and loved. A place where they can reach their maximum level of functioning within their abilities to find happiness, joy, and love from everyone in their environment.

I started as a Mental Health Technician, but a good many of my years have been spent in the dietary dept., first as a SSW and now as a SSC1 or supervisory role. I want to point out that our residents have a very wide variety of special dietary considerations. They range from brittle diabetic diets, low cholesterol, bland, salt free bland, gluten free, 1200 calorie, 1500 calorie, a multitude of different food allergies, and consistencies such as regular foods, chopped foods, pureed foods, and ground mashed foods, thickened liquids to honey consistency...etc. These are the residents who have the ability of oral consumption of foods. We also have about 12-15 different types of liquid nutritional support for those people who require tube feedings. I would like to point out that these people's nutritional needs were established by utilizing our on site team of the best Registered Dietitian and Speech-Language Pathologist in the State of Illinois. Our residents face a multitude of ever changing nutritional challenges due to their physiological needs and disabilities. You can't find these required and vitally necessary services in a group home!

I had the opportunity to be TA'd as a Habilitation Program Coordinator recently and my eyes once again became open. This opportunity allowed me to become part of a multifaceted level of care that comes from an on site professional team dedicated to the continuity of care of our residents. This team

monitors our individuals needs in areas such as self help skills/training programs, dietary needs, medical needs, behavioral needs, pharmacological needs, occupational needs, physical therapy needs, activities/community integration needs...etc. All of these disciplines have daily input into their care and make frequent adjustments to the individuals habilitation plan to assure that our residents can achieve their highest quality of life. You can't find these vitally necessary services in a group home.

I would like to address three people from the Commission specifically now. Sen. Jeffrey Schoenberg, Rep. Elaine Nekritz, and Donna Trotter. It's my understanding that you three people have consistently voted for closure of State operated developmental centers such as ours. I implore you to research the facts and base your decision on merit rather than politics and projected dollar signs. Consider what is truly in these people's best interests to assure them all that life can offer. I am certain that all of you sat down with your children to select a college, an "institution" of higher learning that they may have lived at for a period of time. They lived in this "institution" so that they may be afforded the knowledge and skills necessary to live out their best life possible. You and your children together made this choice of "institution" with the belief that this was best for them. How, then, can you look at these parents and take away their right to choose not only an institution of higher learning but a home for their children. If you would just come and see the people who live here, and speak with their families, you would see that their needs can not be met by community placement options. These people have the same rights as you and your children do.

While we are speaking of rights, I want to touch on some other points. The Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities in its mission statement - "The Voice: advocating equal opportunities for all people with disabilities." And its vision statement - "Equality through change at the local, state, and federal levels." with reference to closing Murray Center, these two notions are conflicting with each other. If this "change" at the state and federal levels involves the closing of all SODC's, then the goal of "equal opportunities for all people with disabilities" can not be reached! Why are these disabled citizens who live in these facilities being targeted by a group that is supposed to be advocating for their equality and opportunities? Murray Center is providing the highest level of opportunities and level of equality to these citizens already. Do not strip them of their rights.

I would also like to remind you three of your obligation to the people, especially the disabled people who call Murray Center their home. Abraham Lincoln spelled it out in his Gettysburg Address - "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." "...and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth." Please remember to be truly "for the People" when you make your recommendation. Don't allow this type of government to perish from the earth.

Another great leader was Dr. Martin Luther King. In his speech, he spoke out about inequality of people and strived for equal rights of ALL people. He stated "When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the 'unalienable Rights' of; Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.'" In one of his most famous quotes he says, "I have a dream that one day this

nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal.'"

In order for these people to have the best life possible, and to keep their God given rights, they must not be stripped from the services they require or the place they call home.

I ask you to consider this when making your recommendations. Ask yourself, "Am I really giving the people who live at Murray Center their unalienable rights of life, liberty and happiness? Do I believe that they, too, are created as my child's equal? Am I acting in a way that is demonstrating a government that is truly for the good of these people? Is this about policy or is it about doing the right thing? Will community placement really afford these people with the BEST opportunities and provide for equality in their lives? Make a difference in these peoples lives and vote "NO" to the closure of this wonderful place so many call home.

Thank You,
JoAnn Pingsterhaus
206 Sunset Dr.
Bartelso, IL 62218

To: Commision on Government Forcecasting and Accountability,

We understand the Governor is recommending the closing of the Warren G. Murray Development Center at Centralia, IL. We are appealing to the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability to please not approve this request by the Governor, to take away the home of 270 developmentally and physically handicapped individuals.

My sister, Kimberly Williams, has been a resident of Murray Center for 46 years and any kind of change to her daily routine or to her living situation dramatically affects her sense of well-being. In the past when she has made a move from one cottage to another at Murray Center she has been in a state of depression for weeks and sometimes months. Yet she has gotten through it because of the outstanding staff at Murray Center. She loves Murray Center staff because they are like family to her. I can only imagine that a move of this magnitude would be very difficult for her to make. Change is not easy for her to adapt to given her limited emotional and mental coping mechanisms. Therefore we are asking that you not displace my sister from her home and put her through this emotional anguish and trauma.

Respectfully,

Beth & Martin Samples
3404 Debra Dr.
Anderson, IN 46012

Please don't close Murray Center. It is home to all of the people who live there. Some it is the only home they know. I have worked there for 33 yrs. I've seen some leave , but many have come back because they can not live in group homes. We are their family too. We care about them the way we care about our own children. So Please keep us open. For them.

Carol S. Sellers

To Whom It May Concern,

March 12, 2012

Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL should not close. Murray Center is a home for the entire population who reside here. It is comfort for them to know that they have a place to call home with caring people to provide support for them. Many of the employees who work here have been here for several years. A large group of residents have lived here since they were in their early childhood. This is the only place they know as home. I am sure you would not want to be forced out of your home because the state thought they could save some money. The residents that reside here are vulnerable in the general population. They did not ask to be this way. We need to provide the care that is necessary to keep them safe.

I am a social work intern from SIUE doing my practicum for my BSW this year. I have seen the caring and compassion that is strived to care for the residents.

The staff goes above and beyond the call of duty to provide the best quality of life for the residents. The buildings are well kept and a safe environment. The residents are never bored. Activities are provided everyday to keep them engaged in the community. I have worked at a 16 bed ICF/DD facility for 5 years. The care that was done at the group home does not compare to the care here at Murray Center. I have seen how hard it is for the staff to get Murray Center residents into group homes. Many times the group homes are unable to accommodate to the needs of the residents. If currently the community homes are unable to take some individuals, then what is going to happen when Murray Center closes and they have to take them? The quality of care for the residents is going to go down. If the residents were able to live in community homes they would be in there and not at Murray Center.

On site at Murray Center they have a wide array of services for the residents.

The services include but not limited to dental, X-ray, pharmacy, dietary, barber, and day training. If these residents were to be placed in the community these services would not be readily available to them. On top of the services, there are caring doctors who are available at anytime to help with the medical needs of the residents. What community living home would be able to provide this type of care at any time of day? The state will have to pay more for the medical care of the individuals since they would not be taken care of as well as they would have at Murray Center. Preventative care is important to the state of Illinois. I believe that Murray Center does just that. When an issue arises they take action and deal with the problem before any major medical interventions need to be taken.

What am I to say to the residents who have come up to me asking, "Why are they closing Murray Center?" or "Where am I going to live?" This is a question that they need answered. I hope the answer is, "You are going to stay right here at Murray Center, YOUR home."

So please reconsider the closure of Murray Center. This is a home just like yours and mine. We would not want to be kicked out so they do not deserve this either. The state needs to figure out alternatives to save money then close a perfectly productive home.

Sincerely,

Megan Humphrey

Social Work Intern, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Trenton, IL

Commissioners:

I am, of course, opposed to the closure of Murray Developmental Center.

My reasons (as stated in my earlier letter) were:

- 1) the residents' difficult and unsafe transition to community settings after having been residents of Murray Center for 10, 20, 30, 40+ years;
- 2) the negative economic impact to Centralia and the surrounding communities (with 9-11% unemployment already);
- 3) most of Murray Center's population not being appropriate for community settings. Let me elaborate on #3.

In looking at the actual figures, of the population of 275 residents, approximately one-third of the population came to Murray Center from group homes, ICF/DD facilities, and CILA homes because they could not be taken care of in these settings. Another one-third of the population came to Murray Center from other state-operated developmental centers or state-operated mental health facilities, so they obviously are not suitable for community homes or they would already have been placed there rather than having been transferred to Murray Center. Therefore two thirds of the current population is not suitable for CILA, ICF/DD or group homes, even if there were CILA, ICF/DD, and group homes available, which doesn't seem to be the case. The other one-third came from their family homes after their families were no longer able to care for them at home. Although there may be a very small percentage that might be able to function in a community setting, the majority of this population would not be appropriate. As has happened many times in the past at Murray Center, individuals are placed in community settings, and after a time become unmanageable in these settings, only to be re-admitted to Murray Center. If Murray Center closes, where will these failed placements go?

Please consider these facts when making your decision on the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Lueking
116 S. Oak Street
Hoffman, IL 62250

March 12, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706
Dear Commission:

It is my request that you consider making the recommendation to the Governor to keep Murray Center open for numerous reasons. As a Social Worker and Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional (QIDP) with the Chester Mental Health Center, I went through the hardship and uncertainty of not knowing whether I was going to be displaced or possibly terminated when the Governor proposed to close Chester without taking into consideration the impact of this ill-advised proposal. Additionally, I witnessed the suffering that my co-workers, their families and the community endured, but more importantly I witnessed the hardship that this proposal had on the patients who call Chester home.

Again, in my home community of Centralia, I find myself pleading with this distinguished group of legislatures to reconsider the proposal to close Murray Center, for the sake of "effective fiscal management." As with my experience at Chester, I am again witnessing unnecessary hardship on the staff, families, community, and most importantly on those who have the most to lose, the residents. My 45 year-old, developmentally developed sister, Paula has called Murray Center home for essentially all of her life. She has limited cognitive ability and essentially no understanding of the need to move nor does she have the coping ability to adapt to a new environment for any length of time. Paula is typical of the majority of residents who only know Murray Center as home and essentially the closing of this facility would disrupt and traumatize an already marginalized group of special individuals who would suffer unnecessarily from this ill thought out proposal.

It has been my pleasure to know and work with this great group of professional staff over the years. The staff has initiated treatment, through habilitation and continuous interaction with those who suffer

severe and difficult to treat developmental disabilities. Murray Center's success has been astounding in achieving the goal of treatment and habilitation, while protecting the safety and welfare of the residents on a level second to none. This is a result of the dedication of a specially trained staff who has given their best in adverse situations, maintaining a positive, caring, and overall loving attitude toward the residents.

You are about to hear from some of employees, families and community members through their personal written testimonies that they have offered to share related to the impact that Murray Center has on everyone affected by the Governors ill-advised proposal. We share these experiences with you to convey the loss to the community, the employees, and most importantly the residents who will be evicted without justification from their homes. When you are deciding the fate of Murray Center, remember that the employees are real, hardworking people, families are emotionally burdened, and the residents who live at Murray Center are unnecessarily disrupted for the sake of a minimal financial savings, as proven with other proposed facility closures. Thank you.

Sincerely,

William J. Henson

William J. Henson, MSW, BS, BA
Social Worker, QIDP

Commission for Government Forecasting and Accountability
Attn: Facility Closures
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed closure of the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL.

To allow this facility to close would be a travesty of the worst kind. This facility is the sole means of employment to well over five hundred people. To take these jobs away from these folks would mean that more people would be on the already lengthy unemployment line, and in turn would devastate our local economy. It would also mean that a lot of families in the region would have no income at all, as many couples, single parents, and single income families depend on this income and the insurance plans provided by this employment, to support their families and their way of life, which by no means is extravagant.

This closure would also devastate the entire region of the Marion, Clinton, Washington and Jefferson counties, as well as several outlying areas. Mainly, the town of Centralia, where this home is located would become almost non-existent. This is a small town of about fourteen thousand people.

The largest employers in the region are this home, a state correctional facility, and a factory or two. The city itself and the city school district also make up a large portion of the employment in this community. To lose the jobs and the extra income brought in by the visitors and the residents of Murray Center would be a loss that this already ailing city would most likely not be able to overcome.

Also, if the attempt of the facility closures is to save the already fiscally dismal state budget, it seems to make absolutely no sense to close a facility that actually brings more from federal and private reimbursement programs than the state actually spends to operate this facility. Would that not be counterproductive, almost ludicrous to actually remove the extra funds from the already overloaded state budget?

I also wish the commission to reconsider the closure of the Animal Disease Laboratory located in this same town. It seems to be absurd to close the only lab in the state that is accredited to test the animals that many Illinois farmers export to other states and countries. To think that a farmer in Clinton County would drive five hours to Galesburg only to find out that this lab cannot perform the tests that they depend on to export their swine or cattle would cause a huge loss in income for them, and in turn a large loss in the state's tax revenue.

The real reason that I oppose the closures of these facilities is simple. As an employee of the Warren G. Murray Center, I was hired to care for and to also advocate for developmentally disabled adults. This is a job that I enjoy, take seriously, and also take pride in. I work on a residential building that houses fifty-four adult males. All of these PEOPLE have severe disabilities, whether it is in the form of maladaptive behaviors or medical problems or physical limitations. These people are completely dependent on us to provide a safe, structured environment, one in which they all thrive and learn. The biggest need we fill for the people we serve, is the need for companionship. I am not only their caregiver, but I am their brother, their friend, whatever it is that they may need. As such, I have also become their advocate and their voice.

As a state employee, I am required to undergo certain training and am expected to do certain things. Each year, I have to take what is called "ethics training." This is laughable considering that this administration has not made a single ethical decision in any proposed closure, not just this one. The biggest issue I have is the fact that I am a required mandated reporter of any abuse that I am witness to, whether it is at work, or away from my job. To move these people, many of whom have resided at Murray Center since childhood, would be traumatic. I consider this to be the worst form of abuse. I feel compelled to report this as mental and emotional abuse, not to mention exploitation of the disabled people who reside in this home.

The animal disease lab is also part of this abuse. This facility is used by the municipalities to make sure that the water and food consumed by these people, as well as the rest of the entire southern part of the state, as well as private industries and farms is safe to consume.

It seems the biggest abuse is the abuse of power by Governor Quinn. He is preying on the most vulnerable of our society. The true test of humanity is how we treat our most vulnerable, and in this case there is nothing humane about this decision. The people that live at Murray Center get great care. More importantly, they get the emotional companionship that all people deserve from people who genuinely care about them and their feelings, regardless of how many times we get bit, kicked, or injured in the line of duty. My fellow employees and I consider these people as one large extended

family, and many of our residents feel the same way, and as such, to split that up would cause avoidable harm to the people that we care for.

I again urge anyone who can stop this closure to do so. For the sake of the two hundred seventy-six people who live at Murray Center, let them keep their home, their family, and their exceptional way of life. I also ask you to let me keep having my days brightened by the people I serve, for they and my children have made me who I am, and are the reasons I have to smile each day.

Thank You,

Ira White
Mental Health Technician II
Centralia, IL

Murray Center is an integral part of the lives of many southern Illinoisans. Murray Center must remain open to continue providing necessary medical and behavioral care to those with special needs. The huge burden to those forced to find alternate placement if Murray Center closes would be unbearable. The economic impact of closing Murray Center would be very harmful to the region; especially to the families of those employed by the facility; businesses associated with Murray Center, and the expense to families attempting to find adequate care for those displaced from Murray Center.

At the Village of Albers Board of Trustees Meeting held on Monday, March 13, 2012, officials voted unanimously to support Murray Center and all efforts to keep the facility open. Please understand the strong community support for this facility and do not consider closing Murray Center.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration on this very important matter. Please contact me anytime to discuss this issue in depth.

Sincerely,
Stephen Schomaker, Albers Village President

To Whom It May Concern,

I am e-mailing you regarding the proposed closing of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. My uncle, Anthony Olion, has lived at Murray since 1971, and our family has never had a moment of worry because of the wonderful care he receives there. We have zero confidence that a community setting will provide the specific medical and behavioral care available at Murray Center. We visit Anthony often and have never had a complaint because the staff's caring nature and professionalism give Anthony the

support he needs every day, 24 hours a day. If you were to close Murray, you would be evicting my uncle from the home in which he has resided for 41 years.

How we treat those unable to speak or act for themselves... puts on display for all to see... our character. How will you be seen?

Keep Murray Developmental Center open.

Truly,

Carmen Jackson, Niece of Anthony Olion (Elm Cottage) Granddaughter of Anthony's mother, 86 year old
Luada Olion
109 Sugar Pine Lane Apt E
O'Fallon, IL

I retired as a physical therapy aide from Murray Center in 2009. About 1999 we began a wheelchair program at Murray Center and all wheelchair bound residents were evaluated and put on a list according to their medical needs. We then built wheelchairs from scratch matching each resident to their special needs. We lifted each resident into a "simulator". The simulator mimics the body shape and a plaster cast is placed over that. This is an individual measurement for each person, and molded according to their body structure..... trunk, shoulder, hips. This measures where the pressure is, so pressure sores could be relieved and the person made more comfortable. Once it is simulated it goes to a duplicator....which was invented here at Murray Center. The duplicator cuts the foam that mimics the plaster cast. This foam is vacuum formed with the fabric (which is sturdy and washable) and goes around the molded plastic. The fabric color was chosen to match with the client's wishes. The finished product will be just like what was simulated. It takes approximately 40 hours to make one wheelchair. If the resident gained weight the wheelchair was remolded. It is a team of people.....OT, RPT, wheelchair carpenter and a machinist who work together to make the best possible fit for each person. A gentleman on a cottage with very brittle bones, had lain flat for years looking only at the ceiling. They molded him a new wheelchair, and when they put him in the wheelchair and he could see around him he just laughed and laughed because his world had opened up. Another story...there was a young lady with severe behavior issues, (hitting her head, pulling her hair), and we simulated a wheelchair for her. It was so rewarding to see her behavior issues become much less severe as she was more comfortable. These wheelchairs were able to tilt to the side, and up and down, which helped with the J-tube feedings. Public Health surveyors came for their annual review and they had never seen wheelchairs like ours, and they thought the wheelchair was broken, but when they figured out how the chairs worked they were amazed!!!! We also simulated wheelchairs for people in the community, and for other centers in the state. We have a state of the art program that meets the needs of all of our residents. These cannot be

duplicated anywhere. If you close Murray Center what will these people do.....once again they may be trapped in their chairs, uncomfortable and unable to enjoy their lives to the fullest. Now they can participate in everyday activities in the community, on the center, and with their families. Please keep Murray Center open and these services available for everyone who needs them.

Helen Kuester

Please keep Murray Center open. Murray Center provides exceptional care for a people who are developmentally disabled with wide variety of behavioral problems and medical problems. Dozens of these people have lived at Murray for more than 40 years. I know I do not like change, even the changes I choose for myself, and I understand why I must make those changes.

These poor people are going to be forced to make changes they probably don't want and they can't understand the reason, especially if the reason isn't reasonable or valid. I don't want someone moving me to a strange place to live with people I don't know where I have to start all over again. Please have mercy on those people and leave them alone. If you must close down developmental centers, then do it gradually - not all at once like this. Let them people live out their lives where they are and then if you don't need the institutions, close them after those people don't need it any more. Murray Center has wonderful staff and the cost of operations is apparently not a burden for the taxpayers of this state because of the Federal reimbursement money. It just doesn't make any sense to close this Center. I think the governor must have made a hasty decision. Please urge him to reconsider. Please represent these people who live in Murray Center and let them stay in their home. Do not evict them and keep Murray Center open.

Thank you.

Shirley Kabat
Resident of Illinois

I HAVE WORKED IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABLED POPULATION FOR OVER 20 YEARS AND THE CLOSURE OF MURRAY CENTER IN CENTRALIA IL IS LUDICROUS. SOME OF THE CLIENTS HAVE MADE THIS FACILITY THEIR HOMES SINCE 1964. IF THE GOVERNOR WERE TO WORK A DAY IN THIS FACILITY HE MIGHT HAVE A BETTER PERSPECTIVE OF WHAT HE SLASHES WITH HIS INK PEN. WE HERE IN CENTRALIA LOVE OUR WORK AND THESE INDIVIDUALS, AND BELIEVE MONEY CAN BE TAKEN FROM OTHER PLACES. PLEASE SEE THAT THE GOVERNOR GETS ALL THE MESSAGES SENT FROM OUR TOWN AND LET HIM KNOW WHAT A MISTAKE THIS WOULD BE FOR THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE IN THIS FACILITY.
THANK YOU

ANN BREUER
CENTRALIA IL



SHE CANNOT TALK; SHE CANNOT CRY;
CAN YOU HEAR HER SCREAM INSIDE:
DO NOT CLOSE MY HOME

DO NOT CLOSE MURRAY CENTER

Preface:

At 5 1/2 yrs of age, Stefani spent six weeks of respite care at Bowen Center in Harrisburg, IL. (I had developed a constant cardiac arrhythmia due the stress created by the belligerence of a special education director. With two older children and the 24 hr. attention Stefani required we had to make the devastating decision to make Bowen Stefani's home.

My health was at risk; however, I still live with the cardiac condition.) A governor decided to close Bowen and provide a youth detention center there. We were moved to Anna Mental Health (now Choate). Stefani was there awhile until they told us she needed to go the Murray Center where because

of her profound disabilities she could be best cared for. Murray and Centralia were a godsend; it suited her perfectly, medically and physically. No one can duplicate the quality of care she gets at Murray. She will die outside of Murray's care.

Dear Members of the Commission:

We are the parents of Stefani whose home for many years has been Murray Center. Our daughter is 43 yrs. old. She has profound mental retardation, Level IV (functioning up to 9 mo. of age); epilepsy, which is poorly controlled; cerebral palsy; moderate spastic quadriplegia; poor eyesight (plus other diagnoses connected to these major ones); a feeding tube; and she does not speak. She does not cry. She is wheelchair bound.

As you can see, she needs 24hr. total nursing care.

We dare anyone to find more loving, kind, or more compassionate caregivers nor a safer environment than she has at Murray. Their understanding of her is unbelievable; it gives us true peace of mind. With their training, Stefani has the best in quality of care money can buy. She has had multiple ER visits; surgeries; and other inpatient stays at St. Mary's Hospital. The availability of physicians and the hospital nearby is so important. Stefani always has a caregiver with her whether it's an ER visit or hospital stay. Without their acute attentiveness in some cases, she would have courted disaster. She has access to a doctor on staff; a neurologist via webcam at SIU School of Medicine; a dentist; a dietician; a physical therapist; nurses; LPN's; educated caregivers; a foster grandparent, etc. Where outside of Murray can she get this kind of care? We have been so grateful that we have always been totally involved in all decisions regarding her care.

Her volunteer foster-grandparent visits her during the week and other volunteers offer their services throughout Murray Center. Many organizations and individuals throughout Centralia and surrounding area support Murray and our Parents Association which has done so many things the state does not provide, such as buying defibrillators and other medical equipment; lounge chairs; TV's; cable, etc. Our raffle in October is always a success and allows us to make life better for our children. The cottages' calendar is always full of activities, just like if the residents were at home. Even though Stefani cannot participate, she is present to enjoy what she can. You see the employees create a wonderful home environment for the residents.

The closure of Murray Center will be devastating for our Stefani and her friends. Our Stefani would not survive community placement; her problems are too severe; she is too fragile. No one and we mean no one will convince us that she will be better off anywhere else. Murray Center's excellence in the care of our children does not seem to be questioned; it's all about the money; the agenda of special interest groups and politics as usual.

Sure, some disabled can live in group homes. We have two group homes in our rural county for higher functioning individuals. They go to a workshop. The savings to the state would be so minimal there would be little effect. The costs in closing Murray and placing residents elsewhere would be staggering because we would demand the same services we are getting today at Murray. At 74 and 77 years of age, the closing of Murray scares us to death and has begun to affect our physical and mental health.

Those whose agenda it is to close all mental health facilities and integrate all disabled into the community have had the Governor's ear for too long. We know they have lobbied him and his staff for months. Their agenda is a fantasy. Where was our children's input and our input in this decision? We pray the Governor will visit Murray and spend some time with us and our children. At the end of the day, he would see he has made an uninformed and ruthless decision; we believe bordering on criminal. Deaths will occur.

We beg for your compassion and hope you will in a compelling manner cause the Governor to rescind his decision on Murray Center. Our daughter's life depends on it.

Thank you for your attention, we are,

Stefani's parents,
Richard and Melba Gonzalez
PO Box 61
Red Bud, IL 62278

Addendum: Richard is a retired Illinois Police Officer of 34+ years on the road. Melba is a retired office manager and medical assistant of 23 years for Internal Medicine doctors

My name is Erin Smith. I am a speech pathologist that had the opportunity to spend some time at the Murray Center in Centralia, IL. I have seen first hand the services which are provided to the residents of Murray Center. I am an opponent to the closure. If needed, I can provide a written testimony on my views.

Erin Smith

March 15, 2012

To Representative Michael Tryon,

I am outraged by the proposed closures of the Illinois facilities for the handicapped. It is my understanding that this proposal is being presented to assist Illinois government to 'balance their budget'. I have been aware that consolidation of these facilities in Illinois has been an ongoing topic, but to completely close down existing qualified facilities that provide superior care to our disabled men and women does not make sense and cannot be cost effective. I am also saddened about this proposal, and am particularly concerned about the Warren G. Murray Center for the severely handicapped in Centralia, IL.

My brother, Billy Scriver, has severe cerebral palsy, is nourished through a feeding tube, has a specialized wheel chair, and is able to communicate common words and phrases through his eyes, expressions, and through the words "Yeah and No". He also has an Electronic Communication Device to assist him in communicating, with the assistance of a speech therapist. Billy receives speech and physical therapy, along with other specialized health, dietary, hygiene care, etc. The bottom line is that Billy cannot take care of himself without full time assistance of trained staff.

The Murray Center facility consists of:

- Single floor brick buildings that are totally handicapped accessible and have adequate HVAC,
- Open space and land (for expansion, if necessary, and for current residents),
- Provides 24 hour nursing care to those that require it, a laundry facility, dietary specialists and kitchens, speech and physical therapy, and other specialized care on site.
- This facility also has a nearby hospital that can care for the residents of the Murray Center as necessary for severe illnesses.

It appears that the State of Illinois is trying to balance the budget at the risk of those Illinois residents that cannot take care or speak for themselves. The fact is; there is probably a lot of waste of expenditures in Illinois that contribute to the State Budget deficit. The specialized care of the severely handicapped cannot be considered in this category of waste. I have seen numerous situations where quick decisions are made without knowing all of the facts. Frequently, the end result is that there are no cost savings; increased expenditures, or worse, services provided are inferior and deficient to services currently provided.

The questions that immediately come to my mind are:

- Has a study been done to compare the costs of land, utilities, specialized equipment, etc.?
- Has a study been done to find out in detail exactly what services the Warren G. Murray Center provides to the severely disabled men and women residents; many of whom have specialized needs?
- Has a study been done to research the outcome of similar consolidations in other States?
- Has a study been done to forecast what 'specialized needs' the Warren G. Murray Center's residents will have in 2 years, 5 years, 10 years, etc., as the needs of these residents will be ever changing?

- Has a study been done to research alternatives to closing all of these Centers (i.e., keeping some of the facilities in Illinois open)?

I believe the answers to questions above, are NO.

I am trying to write this letter without the strong emotions I am feeling, as I understand that sometimes only facts and figures is what may matter. What I want to say, however, is that there is more to these proposed closings than facts and figures (although I believe the facts will speak for themselves once fully investigated). What Illinois government officials are proposing is not only cruel and inhumane, but is a disgrace to the state of Illinois. I appeal to you to please gather the facts and budgetary projections, visit the Murray Center, and take the correct action to **NOT CLOSE Warren G. Murray Center.**

Sincerely,

Sandra E. Bartnik
800 Hartfield Drive
North Aurora, IL 60542

Keep Murray Developmental Center OPEN. Residents need the specific medical and behavioral care available at Murray. This care is not available in a community setting. Don't evict those unable to speak for themselves from their home.

Alex Choice

Dear COGFA Panel,

My name is Connie Ward, and I work at Warren G. Murray Developmental center in Centralia. I currently work as a security officer, but have also worked as a dietary worker and as a Mental Health Technician in the past.

I feel that I know our residents of Murray in many different aspects of their lives. Many of our folks need very close attention due to severe behaviors and danger of elopement. They also have many medical needs that require twenty four hour nursing care. This requires people that know them well and care about their well being. We often know their needs just by certain eye movement or body language. Our staff has worked with these folks for many years and we are a part of their family. We have a relationship and provide a loving home to them. Many of our residents do not adapt to change well. They are happy and are well-adjusted to living in their homes at Murray. I fear that uprooting them will damage their lives and will surely be fatal to some.

Please protect the lives of Centralia's most vulnerable residents by leaving them in their home and community. THIS IS THEIR HOME! They are a part of our community. These folks attend many festivals, parades, and shop at the stores in the area. I invite you to visit Murray Center and meet our "family" , and see their home. Many lives will be affected by the decision that you make, so I plead with you to do the right thing and recommend to leave Murray Center open.

Sincerely,

Connie Ward
RR#1, Box 195B
Xenia, IL 62899

3/19/2012

Public Comment regarding the closure of the Murray Center

by Gerald and Jeanne Haar

This statement is written on behalf of Brian Haar, a special needs individual living at the Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois.

We are the parents of Brian Haar and we oppose the closing of the Murray Center.

Brian was born with a diagnosis of Down's Syndrome. He now is an adult with a mental age of 17 months. He is severely retarded and is considered developmentally disabled. He also has many physical limitations. For example, he has difficulty communicating because he cannot speak. As he grew older at the Murray Center he has acquired additional health problems. He has a feeding tube and suffers from respiratory problems. It is not unusual for Brian to require hospitalization several times a year.

We placed Brian at the Murray Center at age eight because he was unable to live a "normal life". He had "special needs" and needed a "special place" to live. Brian Haar is now in his 40's and still living at the Murray Center. Thanks to the Murray Center he has developed in his own limited way. For example, when he entered the Murray Center he could not walk. He moved about by scooting on his buttocks. Because of the care opportunities the Murray Center provided and with the efforts and love of the employees of the Murray Center Brian can now walk. He has lived a better life because of the Murray Center.

As a parent of a special needs child one always questions if you made the right decision when you place your loved one outside the home. Are we doing the right thing for Brian? How will it affect the family? Will we find the right place for him so he can live a comfortable and safe life within his limitations?

We consider ourselves fortunate that we found the Murray Center. By the efforts and love of all the employees at the Murray Center we want you to know we support the Murray Center because over the years we have come to realize the Murray Center is not an "institution". The Murray Center is now Brian's home. The employees have accepted Brian's limitations and have worked with him to maximize his limited potential. As much as any other "normal" home Brian lives among family. Each day he has family caring for him. They know him and they love him. We believe this because of the way they talk about him when we visit and their attention to his care needs. They are a positive influence in his life.

One of the reasons why the State of Illinois wants to close Murray is because of the poor physical plant conditions. I have worked in the long term care industry for over forty years. I have worked with or visited hundreds of nursing and developmental facilities. It has been my experience the physical plant of

a facility ranks on the lower end of what is considered quality care. The “care atmosphere” that the employees creates and works within is the most important. Murray Center has a “positive and caring” atmosphere. This type of atmosphere is hard to achieve and is definitely not present in all facilities. If the Murray Center was a poor performing facility then I could understand the state wanting to take some action. However, this is not the situation.

The Murray Center's residents and employees did not cause the state's financial crisis. There are many other areas for the State of Illinois to consider to balance the budget. The legislators should first direct their cost reduction efforts toward the expenditures that actually caused this financial problem. These are the areas that are in the newspapers daily. Areas like government mismanagement and waste, government contracts, special interest groups, judges getting 85% of their ending salary as pensions, etc., etc, etc. The disabled residents at Murray Center's only want to live in the same safe and comfortable environment that they have been accustomed to for many years. The employees only want to make an honest living by working and caring for these residents.

The State of Illinois has a responsibility to it's citizens. This is one of the primary purposes of state government. Yes, even with their limitations, the residents of Murray are citizens of the State of Illinois and the State of Illinois has an obligation to handle the Murray Center's residents affairs in a responsible manner.

Why then would the State of Illinois consider the closure of a facility that benefits some of its most vulnerable citizens. The proposed closing of the Murray Center is promoted as a budget/cost issue but in reality is a state's moral responsibility issue. The State of Illinois is considering action directed towards citizens who are the least capable to care for themselves. They need someone to defend them not use them as political pawns. Is it possible the governor and state legislators has become so overly concern about the “state's” financial affairs it has forgotten their basic responsibility is to govern for the people first?

On a personal level, as members of the Commission you have the responsibility for a very difficult decision. We implore you to be truthful to your personal principles, values and beliefs. Apply common sense. Consider what is honest and fair. Take politic out of it. Govern in a responsible way for all the people of Illinois, and in particular, for the residents and employees of the Murray Center.

We respectfully submit this statement for the Commission's consideration.

Gerald Haar and Jeanne Haar
Parents of Brian Haar

To whom it may concern:

Our names are Floyd and Betty Hughes. Our daughter has been a resident at the Murray Center since April of 2000. Before this our daughter was in a small group home for only four. Many may believe that a small home environment is better, but this was not the case for our daughter. Our daughter has self abusive behavior and the smaller home was unable to deal with these behavioral problems. Instead they gave her more drugs to keep her under control. She became addicted to the injections they were giving her and this compounded the problem. While in the home she put her head through two windows and was unable to be controlled.

The Murray Center was an answer to our prayers. They addressed her problems without drugging her. The staff is good to her. They work with her continually to help her achieve as much as possible. Carolyn has been very happy in her home there. They keep us updated with her progress, and are always happy to answer any of our questions.

Unfortunately we are not able to care for her as we were in our younger years. We are getting on in age. My husband has had many strokes and I am a diabetic. We find much peace in knowing that our daughter is in a good home where she is happy should the Lord take us home to Heaven. The facility there has offered so much for Carolyn that a small group home cannot.

We know that the state is low on funds. You have to understand that we love our daughter, and won't stand by and let her just be put anywhere. This is her home we are talking about. The only home she has known for the last twelve years. Many people with mental disabilities learn to function because of routine. This routine becomes vital to them. Our daughter is almost thirty-four and would not welcome change. It was a hard decision to make when we put Carolyn in the home, but she has thrived there in so many ways.

I am a dish washer at a nursing home. My husband cannot work due to his multiple strokes. If the home closed and we were forced to bring Carolyn home I would have to quit my job to care for her. After we leave this world I have three other daughters who have families of there own to care for. I wanted a settled home for her so that all my girls would need to do is visit Carolyn.

With deep concern,
Floyd and Betty Hughes

Please do not close Murray Center or the Animal Disease Lab - it will completely destroy our town
Beverly Virobik

In the fall of 1958, as newlyweds we waited with anticipation for our first child. What a gift she would be as we were told we would not be able to have children. There were no complications during her gestation; however, there was a busy delivery room on the night our baby girl decided to be born. We trusted the doctors but their decision to delay labor with medication resulted in Jane Rose being born blue and lifeless. After several minutes of intervention she was able to breathe and regained color. We took our precious gift home trusting she was fine. Over the course of her first few years we questioned her development as she did not respond as we expected and fell when attempting to walk. As first time parents, we did not know what to expect but knew something was not right. After multiple evaluations and consultations with many professionals we were told she was mentally retarded, had epilepsy, and would require medications and extensive care throughout her life.

When Jane was only six-years-old it was clear we did not have the medical knowledge or resources to provide for her. We made the very painful decision to place her in Warren G. Murray Children's Center, an hour and a half from our home so she could receive the intensive care and close monitoring she needed. Trusting her daily care to others was an overwhelming life challenge; it was the most difficult thing we have ever had to face, however, the staff welcomed her and our family into the Murray Community. She, like we, settled in and contributed to the caring and nurturing environment found there.

Over the course of Jane's life she has experience repeated breaks through seizures, resulting in multiple medication changes and hospitalizations. She has hit her head and required countless stitches due to seizures. As a very brain damaged person, it is hard for her to manage her feelings and behaviors and has exhibited verbal and physical aggression and had mood swings. Despite these challenges, Jane has won the hearts of her fellow residents and the staff at Murray, and in return they won her affection. Murray is her home and an extension of our home and family.

Murray Center, the staff, residents, other parents, and the Centralia community have provided the nurturance, safety, and love in addition to the medical care Jane needs. We are forever grateful. We remain active in her life by visiting her weekly, attending regular parent association meetings, and advocating for the Murray community. Closing Murray would change our world, unsettle our precious vulnerable girl, and add more challenges to her life.

Jane has endured too many obstacles in life; she needs and deserves her home.

Louie and Shirley Rieman

Our son Shawn was born with oxygen deprivation. He lived with us until the age of thirteen. It was becoming increasingly difficult to meet his needs. We toured several community options along with Murray Center and after many thoughts and prayers we decided that Murray Center had the most to offer Shawn. It was the hardest decision we would ever have to make but we have never regretted it.

Shawn is behaviorally unpredictable and unable to do daily living necessities. He requires assistance with some medical conditions for chronic health problems. Shawn has a profound range of receptive and expressive language. He is non-verbal and does not know what to do in an emergency. Shawn requires 24-hour supervision because of his limited self-help skills, behaviors, and unawareness of danger.

Murray Center provides the trained, caring staff and structured routine life style that Shawn requires. Murray Center has been his home for twenty-six years. Community living would transgress any progress an stability that has been acquired these past twenty-six years. His safety would definitely be compromised Community living is fantastic for some but not for Shawn.

Joe and Marge Winkeler
570 South 4th Street
Breese, IL 62231

Our daughter Tammy had spinal meningitis when she was three days old. We kept her at home with us until she was 26 years old, when we were unable to care for her due to her increasing medical and behavioral problems. She has had several community home placements and these have all failed miserably with Tammy continually being rejected by the homes, as they could not care for her. She was placed in a home in Fairfield with 10-12 other residents. She lasted in this home for only 1 (yes ONE) hour as they said they could not handle her behavior. Staff at this home also confided in me that during the evening shifts they frequently had parties and socialized with their friends instead of watching the clients. She was then placed in another community facility. They too kept her for only a few hours and said she was "impossible" and they would not care for her. We then tried a community based home in Tennessee that supposedly had one on one care. Tammy saw where the worker had the put the keys that "locked" her in and she stole the keys. She unlocked the door, ran away, and went to a house several blocks away, and knocked on the door. This was where she was supposed to have "one-on-one" care. They called the police and it took four policemen to get her into the car.

She then was placed in a group home in Olney. They frequently only had one person on staff. Tammy become violent, and they could not deal with the problem, so they called the police. It again took four policemen to subdue her, and by the time we arrived the next day she was at the police station. She was finally seen by a doctor and he ordered that she move to Murray Center. She has thrived at Murray Center. Within a year her behaviors decreased, she is happy, and very well adjusted. We take her home to visit, but when we do she will no longer stay over at our house...she wants to "go home" to Murray Center. We are so grateful for the care she receives at Murray Center. We especially appreciate the dedicated medical staff at the Center. They call us when ever Tammy has any problems, and they let us know about everything!!!! If Murray Center closes its doors where will someone like our Tammy live. It is obvious from four failed community placements that the community is NOT prepared to care for someone with her specialized needs. We know that in the community the only way they could possibly care for her is to drug her into a stupor, and then what quality of life would she have. Murray Center has the experience, the staff, and the knowledge in how to deal with severely behaviorally challenged mentally handicapped people. Don't take away Tammy's home. The community continues to make

promises but these never materialize.....if four placements have failed, what makes the Governor think the next one would work. Use common sense and decency and keep Murray Center open, or there will be dreadful consequences for our loved ones and the community.

Tammy's parents' - Joe and Teresa Hill

Roy Lee was in Lincoln Developmental Center until it closed. He moved to Murray Center in July 2002. Roy Lee went to Lincoln in October of 1954. My father passed away, and the Doctor suggested that Roy Lee move to Lincoln.

Roy Lee has never talked. He has very bad lungs, and needs a lot of care, both medical and behavioral care. Murray Center has been especially good for Roy Lee.

If he hadn't had the care he has received at Murray Center he wouldn't be here today. Please do the right thing and keep Murray Center open for my brother Roy Lee.

Thank you,

Beverly S. Huls
24375 Old Seaton Hill Road
Danville, IL 61834

My son, Rigney is profoundly mentally retarded and autistic. Before his admission to Murray Center, he was aggressive towards others, he would strike himself in the head, punching and kicking holes in the walls of our home when he became upset. At school, he would have to be physically restrained by the staff up to thirty-five (35) times a month because of trying to injury himself. Because of the medication he took, it caused tremendous weight gain which compromised his respiratory system, which resulted in him being placed on medications to help him breathe. Rigney is unable to speak and could not even chew his food. He was on a semi-liquid diet. Even with my education - I am a Clinical Nurse Specialist and giving Rigney the best community care resources available, he destroyed our home and was admitted to Murray Center for a four month stay in 2004.

Unfortunately when Rigney returned home he returned to his previous behaviors and is physically assaulted his caregiver. For his safety and the safety of others, he was placed at Murray Center in 2005.

Murray Center staff saved my son Rigney's life!!!! He is not on the right medication and has decreased his episodes of injuring himself and others. He is learning to sign and they are teaching him how to chew food. This is only because of the care of Murray Center. Murray Center's dedicated staff care for and are able to provide a safe, environment for Rigney. It is because of their expertise and training, rigney is able

to thrive. Murray Center is his home. Rigney can NOT survive out of this type of environment. It has given me peace to know my son is safe and well taken care.

Thank you,
Stacia Watson

Please do not close Murray Center or the Animal Disease Lab - it will completely destroy our town
Beverly Virobik

Dear members of the committee

I stand in opposition of the planed closure of Murray Developmental Center I have been employed at Murray Center for almost Seventeen years i started there when i was nineteen and I'm now thirty six i have spent almost my entire adult life there you could say i grew up there and matured into the man i am today. I have spent more time with the residents then i have my own family we spend our weekends and our holidays with them. Murray Center is more than a paycheck for me and everyone else who works with these individuals every day they are special people and our extended family who need special people to work with them. Community placement will work for a small hand full of residents but the center has been actively trying to find community placement for those that would prosper in this type of setting but those community facility's are not out there and for the people with severe medical and behavioral issue there is no one in a community to handle the special challenges they have. When people hear the term INSTITUTIONS it seems to conjure the image of the movie One Who Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest or they are living in a hospital ward. This is just not the case, these building s are there home and reflect there personality's. I worked in a 16 bed community home before i came to work at Murray Center I was hired on a Friday received a half day of training on Saturday and started full time on Monday in the ten months i was there i worked with forty different staff because the turn around was so bad so tell me how they can provide for the safety of there individuals they cant. The level of training that's is provided to the staff of Murray Center to ensure they are equipped to handle the challenge of working with indivduals with severe medical and behaveral issue and can not be matched in the private sector were the bottom line is the bottom line its about showing a profit for the company and thats not my opinion thats fact becuaease i worked for such a company. This is not about my job its about there home

Gary Long

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Office Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear COGFA,

I strenuously oppose Governor Quinn's proposed closure of the Murray Developmental Center in Centralia.

The closure of Murray would have a devastating effect on the 550 employees and the economy of the region. Centralia is a community that relies heavily on the employees and families of Murray Center. In addition to losing hundreds of jobs that the area cannot absorb in other industries, the region stands to lose over \$100 million per annum. The closure will hasten the deterioration of a region that is already in poor economic condition. Some businesses that are currently solvent will soon join the numerous other boarded up businesses. There are stores, schools, public services, dealerships, eateries and countless other employers that will not be able to absorb the closure of Murray Center and the resulting lack of income generated by the gainfully-employed Murray Center staff. Public assistance claims will skyrocket and the State will dole out assistance to those families in need. Real estate prices will plummet and foreclosures will undoubtedly hit all-time highs. Families will need to move out of the area to search for the life they now enjoy, further depressing the region. And it is statistically accurate to predict the crime rate will increase soon after the closure.

Although the certain economic decline of the area is of great importance, more importantly is the impact the proposed closure would have on the residents and families of Murray Center. Our son is severely autistic and requires around the clock nursing care. The residents rely on the staff for their health concerns as well as concerns for their safety. The level of care our son requires is not available in community based housing. These residents have families. Families may not be able to visit the residents if Murray Center closes. In our case, after a few weeks of having no visits from us, our son becomes very irritable and a behavior problem for the staff. We try to visit at least every other week and have him at home for the weekend about monthly. Closing Murray center will make frequent visits impossible. Our son is just one of 275 residents of Murray Center. The effects of closure will adversely impact the residents and their families. As a society we must care for these developmentally challenged people who can neither care for themselves nor speak to the problems of closing their home.

We pray the professionals who advise Governor Quinn will consider the health, safety, and comfort of the Murray Center residents and the impact the closure will have on Centralia and the entire region. We hope they will advise the Governor that the money the center costs is well spent.

Sincerely,

Mark M. Abend

Please do not close this place, many people need jobs and the children need a place to be!

Marcella Masteller

March 17, 2012

To My Friends and Fellow Illinois Citizens:

SUBJ: Loving Words from a Resident

The information below is what I think my brother would say about the closing of Warren G. Murray Center, Centralia, IL, and other Centers in Illinois for the disabled. I am his sister, Sandy. He cannot speak for himself, but has been a resident of this Center and Centralia, IL, since 1965.

Sandra E. Bartnik:

My name is Billy Sriver. I am 54 years old and have lived in my home at the Warren G. Murray Center for over 46 years. I cannot speak many words, but can communicate to those that care for me through my eyes, expressions, and question/answers (I can say "Yeah" and "No"). This process is sometimes difficult, but through our years together, we have developed a familiarity with each other that cannot be replaced. I also have an electronic communication device (ECD). I used to be able to push buttons on my device with my fingers, but because of my advanced cerebral palsy, I cannot move my fingers well and now use my eyes to say common words and phrases. Thanks to the Murray Center, my equipment was updated to accommodate my health changes, and so that my speech therapist can help me to communicate more effectively. I had severe pneumonia last year and almost did not survive. I was afraid and could only speak through my family at the Murray Center. Thanks to their attentive oversight and care, and the outstanding hospital staff, I survived and am back home at the Murray Center. Since my illness, I can no longer eat food and get my nourishment through a feeding tube.

I cannot say enough about the wonderful care I get and the love I feel. I have had several wheelchairs that were made to handle my handicapped status. As I grew and as my condition worsened/changed; my equipment has been improved to handle my growth and changes in my health. This could only happen through the great care I receive here at my home in Centralia.

I attend a nearby workshop, get breathing treatments, receive physical and speech therapy, have a nursing staff available 24 hours a day and friends/staff that take wonderful care of me (change my diapers, dress me, know when I am hurting, and know what I need)...as I previously wrote, I cannot talk, cannot walk and cannot take care of myself. All of my friends and fellow residents at this Center receive wonderful care as well. Some of my friends can talk, walk, eat and can help themselves more than I; others are not as fortunate as I. There are no favorites here, though - we are one big family. We are all loved for who we are; intelligent, unique, and feeling men and women that cannot take care of themselves. We are not just surviving here, this is our home where we try to make the most of each day through the staff.

I fear that I will be losing my home. I hear that our home may be gone because there is no money for me to stay here. Apparently someone has decided that we can be taken care of equally as well elsewhere for less money. I also have heard my friends talking about our facility closing and am very sad. Who will take care of me and my friends the way the staff at Murray Center does?

I ask that the Illinois Government decision makers come to see me and my friends. I ask that they re-assess their decision to close down my home. I may be handicapped, but know that the level of care for the cost cannot be beat. Please come visit me and visit my friends and caretakers at this Center. I am sure you will agree when you see the Center and what it provides; what it fulfills for our specialized needs, and re-evaluate their service/cost that you will change your mind.

I speak through my sister for the adults here that cannot otherwise be heard.

Sincerely,

Willam B. Scriver



My cousin, William Scriver, will turn 54 in June and has spent the past 40 years of his life at Murray Center as a resident patient. Bill was born with severe cerebral palsy. Consequently, he has spent his entire life in a wheelchair and has been completely dependent upon others to care for his every need. Only a facility such as Murray Center is properly equipped to provide such care for patients like Bill. His family, all of whom live in the Chicago area, keep in constant contact with him with regular phone calls and frequent trips to Centralia. In all their years of contact with the staff at Murray Center, I have never heard anything but glowing reports from my relatives about how wonderfully they care for Bill. Although his capabilities are quite limited, he has been taught and has learned communication skills. Moreover, he is, and always has been a very happy individual. Originally, it had been predicted that Bill would never live past his teens. It is due to the wonderful care, both physical and emotional, that Bill is with us today. One must wonder - if Murray Center is closed, where will Bill and all the other resident patients go? Who will care for them? Bill's mother - my mother's twin sister - is 91 years old. Bill's siblings are just about to become senior citizens, with children and grandchildren of their own. There is no question that our elected officials, over many years, have not been good caretakers of the state's finances and that is why Illinois is now in the process of ending so many worthwhile programs and closing so many necessary facilities. It is not because the need has ceased to exist. It is solely because our government has acted irresponsibly with the people's monies. It is neither right nor fair that Bill and others like him would be made to suffer - and that is no exaggeration! - due to the careless actions of our politicians, Do the right thing - KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN! Allow it to continue as the loving and viable care center that it has always been.

Gary A. Van Kempema

PLEASE SAVE MURRAY CENTER!!!!((Save their HOME))Its not just about r JOBS!! Their family to us too.We are their voices for alot of them.I also have a family member who was in an accident and lived in Lincoln that was CLOSED due to state closures.She only lived a few months and then past away.Taking her out of her envitonment was very bad for her.she had lived there since she was a baby.This could have been prevented,what if she was part of ure family?You would be suprisd at how many people have died as a result of these types of moves. Closure causes a daily visit close to home to become a three hr drive to see their luvd ones?Don't give up on them!Don't Ruin more families and lives.DO SOMETHING ELSE!!!!

TERESA BOESTER

Please do not close Murray Center. This facility provides a necessary service to Illinois. First, cost should not be a factor-this is somerthing that as a society, we should be willing to support financially. Second, it appears that costs will merely be shifted elsewhere and ultimately probably cost more.

Thank you
Brian Trentman
1549 Township Line Road
DuBois, IL 62831

I am writing on behalf of the residents and employees of Murray Center in Centralia. In fact I include the people of Centralia and the entire region when I say that for the sake of all these residents I ask that you reconsider the closing of this fine facility.

I have a great nephew who has made Murray Center his home for the past 25 years. The care, love and attention he receives from the employees there is second to none. He is a non-verbal autistic young adult whose entire world would be turned upside down if he were to be relocated. His life is one that requires a set routine because he does not understand change. And he is not alone in this situation. Many of the residents are of the same frame of mind.

I fully understand that the state of Illinois is in a financial bind and certainly must cut corners somewhere in order to keep functioning. But to deprive the people who reside there and the caring folks who care for them at Murray Center their way of life is definitely not the best way to go about saving money. I feel that more research and studies into alternative methods to cut back in the entire state must be done before arbitrarily closing the doors on this fine institution.

Our part of the state has already been hit hard with unemployment and now the governor feels it necessary to slam us down even further into hardship and despair. I ask that you research, review and reconsider the closing of Murray Development Center.

I am a lifelong resident of Centralia and Marion County and ask that I be heard in this very serious matter.

Concerned citizen of Illinois,

Sue E. Miller
36 Edgebrook Lane North
Centralia, IL 62801

Murray Center must absolutely remain open as home for over 250 disabled adults. Home must not be taken away from these people. And they are people and should be treated as such, even though they can not speak on their own. Go and visit Murray Center before you deem it of no value and should just be shuttered, to save what? These people must live some where and at what cost would that be.

Janet Huck
Hoyleton, Illinois

Sara Biegeleisen MH2
304 Main ST.
Shattuc, IL. 62231
March 22, 2012

Comission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Testimony: Written Statement For Murray Center
Dear: CGFA

I am writing to ask you to help stop the closer of Murray Mental Health Center in Centralia, IL. This closer will soon come up for review by your committee on behalf of the governor budget plan. Some of the residents (as children) been there since Murray have open and it is their home in ever sense of the way. They have regular life style like working, going to family dining with peer and even running their own café at the center. I have work at Murray Center for the past five years; it has been great working it's with people with disabilities and seeing them improve over time.

The purpose of this closer is to help with the budget but this center is mainly funded by the federal government due to the program we have at the center. Our center brings in more than the cost of running the center. I am sorry but I really don't understand how it will help his budget when this center helps the budget in the long run.

I have two children with disabilities and knowing this center is here and available if I would ever need it is load off my mind because I know my love ones would have the best care they could get because I have work there and seen it first hand. It would be so hard to leave my love ones somewhere else far way and not to be able to see them on regular bases.

I think that this is an important to keep the center open it will benefit the community and keep everyone aware of the different in people. The center has been local landmark for this town and been great asset to this town and community for many years. Our local city and county government officers are in support in keeping the center open.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Sara Biegeleisen

To Whom It May Concern:

Please do not close the Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. It is a much-needed resource for hundreds of developmentally delayed adults, and its closing will create a terrible hardship for them and for their families.

Sincerely,
J. Ellen Leyerle
Urbana, IL

It is inconceivable for me to think that the state would actually consider closing Murray Center. It is very obvious that this facility is in good condition, homes and cares for disabled clients that would not function well in a small facility, and that Southern Illinois has been hard-hit by the downturn of economic times. Please reconsider and DO NOT CLOSE MURRAY CENTER.

I am a former Chamber of Commerce President, owner of a car dealership, and very active in our community. We cannot afford to lose another employer of this magnitude. More importantly, however, is what the uproot of these clients would do to them mentally. This is their home!!!

Sincerely,

Kim Monken McMillan

PLEASE RECONSIDER THE CLOSING OF MURRAY CENTER. THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE IS THE RESIDENTS OF MURRAY & NO PLACE FOR THESE INDIVIDUALS AFTER CLOSURE. MURRAY IS MAKING A PROFIT & IN A STATE THAT IS IN DEEP DEEP IN DEBT!! IT MAKES NO SENSE AT ALL TO CLOSE MURRAY.

GOD BLESS & DO THE RIGHT THING KEEP MURRAY-OPEN FOR ITS RESIDENTS

Butch Boarder

I am opposed to the closure of Murray center. Many of our people have lived there all their lives, it would be disrupting and cruel to force them out of the only home they have ever known. Centralia has also lost several businesses and factories and Murray center is one of the last big employers. Our city would be also devastated by the loss. So for the people who live there and all the citizens of Centralia I am begging you to please vote in favor of keeping Murray center open.

Steve Prunty

I am writing in regards to the recent decision to close Murray Center in Centralia and move the residents into community homes. I have serious concerns about the safety and wellbeing of many special needs residents if this action is taken. A move to group housing may work for many people with special needs, but it isn't the answer in all cases.

My brother, Charlie Andraski, has been a resident of Murray for 30 years and in 2008, at the urging of Murray administration, we tried moving him to the Sutton House, a group home in Mt. Vernon. Sutton House is a fine facility with a homey atmosphere, fine staff and good facilities. I have a sister-in-law who works there and a cousin who is an administrator. I had some concerns about the number of staff kept on duty, and their ability to handle medical situations that may come up, but reasoned I could make myself available to take care of any extra needs my brother may require. We decided to move Charlie to the Sutton House.

I contacted Murray center and they were very positive and cooperative with the transition. We agreed in writing that if the move did not work out Charlie could return to Murray. My brother seemed to like the new arrangements, and other than some mild agitation the first two months went well. However, as time went by my brother became more agitated and began acting out. Pinching and hitting of other residents escalated to hitting, kicking and biting staff members. He began harming himself by throwing himself on the floor and fighting staff attempting to assist with his care.

Murray support staff was still involved with Charlie and a consensus decision was made to change his medicine in an attempt to calm him. This caused other problems and resolved none of his aggression issues. His situation continued to deteriorate and Charlie became more and more difficult for the staff at Sutton to handle resulting in my other brother and myself being called in to help.

We had a meeting at the one year mark with Murray support staff and Sutton House administration. I was assured they were aware of the problems, but both groups felt they could be worked out and to give it some more time. I had my doubts, but I wanted to give the situation every chance to work out. At thirteen months a petition was filled to have Charlie removed from Sutton House. I was notified I needed to find another place for him to live. I contacted Murray Center, but was told they were not taking admissions. Fortunately I was able to contact Senator John O. Jones and he assisted me in getting Charlie back into the Murray Center. By the time my brother returned he was suffering from a broken ankle he received from throwing himself down and several Sutton House staff had been injured seriously enough to warrant trips to the emergency room. I was even starting to have trouble with him at home and dread to think how bad the situation could have become. I give this example to point out how multiple levels of special care are needed by many Illinois residents with special needs. Sutton House is a fine facility and does a fine job as a group home, but it is not designed to provide the type of individual care Murray Center does, and has for many years. Murray Center is not just where my brother Charlie resides; it's where he lives, where he feels he belongs and is best cared for. Since he has been back at Murray he has had only a couple incidents which were properly controlled and is doing much better. I honestly believe every effort was made by everyone involved to make Charlie's move to a

group home successful, but it wasn't. The answer is the Murray Center, the care he receives there is the best he could get, better than a group home and better than I could provide at home.

Sincerely,

Laura E. Graham, Guardian of Charles Andraski
162824 E. Bakerville Rd.
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864

Hello My name is Deanne F and I work at MURRAY CENTER. I Speak for some of our residence. Don't take away our home. You think its just a place to put people. It is are home we have lived hear a long time and the people who take care of us have been here for us. They help us with are daily lives you my not understand this unless u had a love one here or a child that u could not take care of and need help some of us have been hear for 40+ years and our caretakers have been here as long as that we do a lot of things and we are good people so please don't take away our home thank you.

Deanne Foutch

Dear Panel Members, I am writing this letter on behalf of the people who live at Murray Center and the proposal of the Governor shutting it down. I am hoping that it does not happen ! There are alot of them that would not survive in another place either because of their medical ,physical and behavioral issues.I know because I have worked there for almost 23 years.This IS their home and after all the years they have been there it would be too much for them to handle being sent to live where people didn't know how to communicate with them or understand them.I have noticed that when some of them have been placed at other homes they did not survive. I am urging you to please be on their side and DO NOT let the Gov. close Murray Center Down and take away their homes. I am begging you,if this will help!

Sincerely,

Patricia J. Long

March 22, 2012

Omission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

Testimony: Written Statement for Murray Center Hearing

Dear: CGFA

I am a resident of near by township, and I am writing to express my concern about recent discussion and the pending decision to close Murray Mental Health Center/Animal Clinic in Centralia, IL in the 618 area. I understand that the decision is being considered to reduce the state budget but by do this you will cause this community and others in the 618 area to be like fallen leaves on tree blowing away and no longer being part of the tree. This will kill this town and everything around in the 618 area.

However, I do not believe that this benefits the budget due to the federal funding that Murray Center get due to the program they have set up for the residents. I don't know of another health center in IL that has funding like this. So how could this help his budget if we don't cost it?

I work at Murray Center little over year and it's the best job I have ever have in my life. I go home feeling good each day knowing I have help someone that day. Yes, there are days that we have residents that are upset and get out of control but that when you try to calm them down by talking to them with respect and caring in your voice. There are some residents that could never live in the community due to not being aware of what you can or can not eat. They must be watch 24 hours daily due to this because of the health issue.

It would seem that by closing the center would not bring increased growth, or thus a better economy, to our city. It will bring decreasing pollution, jobs and decrease surrounding property values. Are these tradeoffs what we really want to make? I am looking forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Rick Stewart

Commissioners:

My name is Amber Daniels, a student of social work, a concerned citizen of Illinois, and a family member of a resident of Murray Center. The following is my written statement as an opponent to the closing of Murray Center.

What makes a place a home? Is it simply a place where a person resides? Maybe a family must reside within to be considered a home. Maybe it's love. It's possible that where there is love, there is a home. Even if it takes the requirements of residence, love, and family, Murray Center is a home. Governor Quinn and others treat Murray Center simply as a "state facility", while forgetting that it is a home!!! Murray Center is a necessary part of the community of Centralia and Illinois as a whole for many reasons. The reasons are people. The people that live at Murray Center, the people that work at Murray Center, and the people in the community of Centralia.

To the residents of Murray Center, this "state facility" is a home. Many residents have lived there for many years, including my cousin Gary, who is severely mentally disabled. He and many others have tried living in other settings and are happier than ever living at Murray Center. Here, he is protected and cared for as he could be nowhere else. In fact, Gary has so much fun at Murray Center, when he comes back to his parents' home, he gets excited to go back to Murray Center! As many people fail to recognize, Murray Center is not an institution. Residents such as Gary have their own room with a bed, desk, and closet with their belongings. Gary is able to participate in workshop, which allows him the opportunity to develop new skills and gives him purpose in life. He calls this his job and loves going. He also participates in many activities with the other residents.

In addition to the activities he participates in, he has an amazing family at Murray Center. Gary has been living at Murray Center for around twenty years and considers the other residents his family away from home. At Murray Center, there are several cottages and Gary has lived in Daisy Cottage for a long time, along with some residents who have been there the whole time. He always talks about his friends as "my boys" and is always thinking about them. They have become his family. I would say his second family, but sometimes I believe they are his first family and we his second!

Along with "his boys," at Murray Center, Gary has a family in the staff that work with him. The employees at Murray Center are a huge reason to keep the facility open. There are over five hundred employees at Murray Center and never have I heard a bad thing about one of them. The staff of Daisy Cottage treat Gary as their own family and care for him as if he were. As a family of a person with a developmental disability, it is important to feel your family member is safe and cared for. The employees of Murray Center give us peace of mind and let us know our family is loved. The employees are always sure to tell us how much joy Gary brings to them and that means the world to us. That's something that many people don't understand. The life of a special person should not be valued simply for the sake of life, but also for the love they are able to give and the many things they can teach others.

There is also a full time medical team to care for the medical issues of Gary and the other residents. There have been many health incidents with Gary, particularly with heart problems. Without the

medical staff at Murray Center being on site to care for him, Gary may not be with us today. As I've stated before, safety is a huge concern with someone who lives with a severe disability.

For the community of Centralia, I plea with you and the governor to recognize the importance of Murray Center. To recognize the Centralia community as anything but amazing is a complete understatement. My family and I live over an hour and a half from where Gary resides, but we recognize the value in Murray Center so much that we are willing to make that sacrifice. When visiting Gary, we have not failed to notice the value in having Murray Center in the Centralia community. From the standpoint of our family, it is amazing to know that our resident is valued and appreciated in the community. Gary has never been anything but respected in this community. In Gary's hometown, people are not familiar with individuals with disabilities and are unable to communicate with them. Gary would sadly not be respected in my hometown the way he is in Centralia. I'm sure this is the case for many residents of Murray Center. From the view of the community, Murray Center provides jobs and revenue to the people and businesses. Murray Center brings in many visitors who utilize local businesses and bring positive progress to the economy of Centralia. I spoke about the wonderful employees of Murray Center earlier, and I cannot stand to see over five hundred amazing individuals lose their jobs.

So, what will happen if our government closes this home? Not only will several individuals lose their jobs, but Centralia will lose a huge part of its identity. From the economic perspective, aside from the human cost, many of these employees may fall into poverty and require government assistance such as welfare and unemployment. Possibly most importantly, what about the disabled residents? These individuals cannot protect themselves, it is our job to be their voice and keep them safe. Even more than that, rather than making sure they live, we should make sure they thrive as they do at Murray Center. If this "facility" is closed, it is up in the air where many residents will go. It has been mentioned that many can be integrated into community settings including group homes. It is said that there has been success in such places. The question is, success for who? Certainly not for individuals like the residents of Murray Center. Many of the residents, including my cousin Gary, have attempted these living situations and were unable to thrive. There is not enough one on one attention as there is at Murray Center, and there is certainly not the excellent medical care and love. Even if these residents were able to succeed in such settings, there are not enough group homes near the residents' families or probably in the entire state of Illinois. In addition, there have been many issues in these settings with the operation and management. Therefore, the question is, what is the price we put on the lives of our disabled citizens and the peace of mind of their families?

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Amber Daniels

As a former resident of Centralia, Illinois, I can not imagine that area surviving the closure of Murray Children's Center. Not only will it eliminate jobs of hard-working citizens but it will also displace so many of the disabled residents who have come to know this center as their home.

Instead of taking away jobs from these dedicated employees who have built their careers providing for the disabled residents, let's eliminate the flow of our tax dollars providing for over 85% of the births to single parents or the number of children I, as a tax payer, am required to support. The women having these babies, that I have to support, are for the most part quite capable of providing for the children they choose to have. The poor children and young adults in places like Murray's do not have the physical or mental capabilities to provide for themselves, but the State of Illinois wants to close their facility. It absolutely boggles my mind to think that the Governor of Illinois would want to eliminate jobs that keep people employed and keep money flowing to a community but increase the number of people who are living off entitlement programs. If we don't have people getting up every day and going to work, then I don't understand who will be left to support the entitlement programs that so many politicians are fearful to even consider discussing because it would mean political suicide to those in office.

On behalf of those children and young adults who are residents of Murray's and who are incapable of voicing their opinions, please do not close this children's center in Centralia.

Sincerely,

Peggy Bardelli

Dear Sir--The closure of Muarry Center in Centralia as well as other closures is un-humaine. Is there no consideration for the ill or for those 500 employees? The city's affected will close up shop,unemployment will jump up and the American dream will suffer another set-back. How can the state reward the don't wanna work folks with food stamps,housing help,pay,and take away the wanna work folks ability to provide for their families. Please re-think your decisions on these closures.

Thank You

Bud Woods

Dear sir,

As a youngster growing up in Centralia I can remember riding my bike out to see Gov. Stratton landing in a helicopter on the site of what would become Murray Center. I watched as the buildings were being built. Later in life I was privileged to become a firefighter for the City of Centralia, a job which took me to Murray Center on many occasions. A lot of these calls were for emergency situations but the fire dept. also participated (ALONG WITH MANY OTHER COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS) in the Play day for the residents of the center. During these play days the fire dept. would display our fire fighting equipment for the residents and squirt water from our ladder trucks. During the Fire dept. visits whether for an emergency or for the play day it was very heartwarming to see the care given to the residents at this facility. The residents at the Murray Center are given very professional care and it is obvious that the caregivers care deeply for the residents. PLEASE DO NOT CLOSE MURRAY CENTER. THE CLOSING OF MURRAY CENTER WOULD PLACE A TREMENDOUS HARDSHIP ON THOSE WHO DEPEND ON THIS FACILITY FOR THEIR EVERYDAY CARE.

Thanks for your consideration

Phillip Venezia
1536 Walnut Hill Rd.
Centralia, IL 62801

Gov. Quinn,

Please consider how much you will change in the lives of those who can't understand why their life is being changed. We are all thankful that it is not us in their place. How would we feel if our world was turned completely up-side-down because of money.

They have enough on their plate, as it is, without adding more to it. Please find a way to keep it open.

Thank you,
Michael Schuttler
2129 State Street
Quincy, IL 62301

Commissioners

Please take time to rethink the closing of the Murray Developmental Center. Not only will it impact the city of Centralia, but more importantly, it will affect the lives of the residents.

I have heard all of the explanations and answers to the questions about where the residents can go and what would be best for them. When any person who has experienced stability in his or her life suddenly has that stability taken away, the outcome can be disastrous. While these folks may not be part of a voting public, they ARE human beings. They have families and loved ones. Many of the residents' parents are getting up in years and I cannot imagine what this might mean for them. While taxpayers are footing the bills for those who could work but don't choose to or those who know how to play the system, Murray residents have come to depend on us, the people of the state of Illinois for their stability.

This is a time when many are not proud to be citizens of this state, but I cannot imagine how we will react if/when Murray Center closes. Pride is certainly not a word that comes to mind. These residents and those who care for them are a part of the Centralia community and have been for years. Please consider how closing the center would impact those folks.

Sincerely,
Brenda Engel

To whom:

Having grownup in Centralia and knowing what an absolute blessing the Murray Center has been--It seems impossible to me that anyone would think of closing its doors.

I remember when it opened and what a major vacancy had been filled. So many were being served from patients to workers and how so many families found solace and peace for family members.

I would like to encourage the powers that be to really reconsider and see if there aren't some adjustments that can be made and to put the residents first.

Thank you,
Steve Combes---Grandson of Ben & Freda Harrison Kalispell, MT.

My Name is Kim Buchholz I am an RSS at Murray Center. I have been out there for 39 years. I really think it is terrible to even think about closing Murray Center. The people out there are well taken care of...The people have many friends and consider a lot of the staff as their family!!! I have literally grown up with some of the people that live there. and you can see the faces light up when certain staff walk on their living unit. The individuals have picked certain people as their favorites. There are some people that get upset when a certain staff take a vacation. They like the consistency of everybody that they know showing up all the time. They like the routine to stay the same as far as when to eat , shower, go to work.

The people out there are taken out into the community to go to show, go shopping, out to eat and are welcomed into these places. There are many individuals out there that go more places than I do, they are not just taken out there and left, the activity staff are very good at getting them out. they go to St Louis to the zoo, Botanical Gardens, Butterfly Garden and many more places. We have a house on the grounds that is referred to as "The Little House" where different groups are taken and they prepare a meal for each other or have parties and they have on occasion had came outs on the grounds behind the little house. They LOVE it. we also have a prom, a big Halloween party where the individuals get all dressed up in costumes, and at Christmas time the community is invited to a party and a lot of the people come back year after year because they enjoy it so much We have a Santa come around and give out gifts that different groups from the community have donated.

On the grounds we have twenty four hour nursing care, there is a security officer, and there are people in the boiler house. where else are you going to get all this 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The staff really care about the individuals and make sure they are well taken care of, we don't have bed sores or anything of that nature because they are repositioned all the time if they can't do it for themselves. They rely on us for everything.

There are people out there that do not take to change well, it can cause self injurious behavior issues. To a lot of people WE are the only family that they have..we know their wants sometimes by just looking at them we can tell when they don't feel good. The individuals look up to us for their day living skills as far as their bathing, dressing, and other things that we take for granted. We know their quirks, and can tell when a behavior is going to happen and a lot of times that particular person can be talked to and they calm down.

There are people out there with many health issues that would not and could not be addressed in a cilla or group home because they don't have the staff to address these issue as well as behaviors.

There have been people brought out to Murray Center on many Drugs and with a little time and effort a lot of the medicine has been reduced. There has been a couple brought out there with behaviors and a lot of time spent with they have overcome a lot of that.

A LOT of the individuals at Murray Center NEED stability and consistency. They need the staff that they have grown to love and TRUST to take care of them. Instead of sent to a group home where they go

down hill and everything we worked to correct has been reversed in a short time and the people have to come back or have even died.

I am begging you DON'T CLOSE MURAY CENTER for the benefit of the individuals that live there.

Thank you

Kim Buchholz

My son has asked me if he can "meet that guy". He is referring to Governor Quinn. You see Gary has lived at Murray Center in Centralia for the past 20 years and he is happy there. He accepts his peers and the staff as his surrogate family and he worries about them. He calls his peers "my guys". When we go shopping, he always wants to buy stuff to throw parties "for those guys". They also have disagreements, worry when one is sick, and grieve when they lose one. Gary goes to bed when he is ready just like at home. I can go see him anytime of the day or night. His room is full of his stuff. He has his privacy. He is learning to do his laundry and he is being nagged to keep his room clean (just like home and at my request). He doesn't understand budgets and politics but he does understand that the Governor is evicting him and his friends from their home! Again, he just doesn't understand why. Neither do I as his mother and court appointed guardian. I thought I got to make these decisions. Why in the world would I leave my baby and my only son in a facility that did not care for and take good care of him!? That goes for nearly 53% of the residents at Murray! How can you get a better vote of confidence? I believe our Governor has been misled and I am begging him to meet with the families and residents and tour our loved ones' home.

Gary has 24 hour nursing supervision. For two years, in a row, Gary has ended up in the hospital following a seizure that greatly decreased his respiratory and heart rate requiring immediate medical care. There was not time to call a nurse from home. What will happen if that intervention is lost to him? Yet, in between these spells he does ok so who will worry that he needs around the clock nursing availability on sight? Will I lose him? I also fear unlicensed staff dispensing medications that are treating heart disease, high blood pressure and seizures. I am a nurse and I know all about work ethics so you can't reassure me of 100% competency.

Gary is in the position of having lived in another state op facility which has since been closed and he was also in a private group home. The group home discharged him when he hit puberty. They could not handle his behaviors. There was no appeal process in place for that DCFS licensed home. I called Equip for Equality who went to court to try and force DCFS to establish an appeal process. They were unsuccessful in that attempt. So much for needs. Gary cried every time I left him at the group home. He was so far away from us.

Gary is a citizen of the Centralia community. He is well known. He goes to stores, eats out, goes to the rec center, cashes his check at the bank, and shops for his clothes. He always meets people he knows

and they often approach him to chat first! He is certainly not isolated! He is bored when he is at home and often is ready to go back before we are ready to take him back! I have mixed feelings about that but then I feel blessed that he is obviously happy and content and safe!

Governor Quinn you get to choose where you want to live. I get to choose where I want to live. Your supporters and advocates choose where they want to live. Why should Gary not have this same right as a citizen? Just because he is brain injured? He has all the same needs and wants as you and I. Please don't take away this basic right for no good reason that I can see. One size does not fit all. We are begging for our right to choose in the free country that we live in! I am insulted that you and these "advocates" have made the assumption that they know better than I do what is right for my son/ward.

Please meet with us and tour Murray Center and talk to the residents. You will see that it is "home" to them. My son who thinks he is the social director will probably want to give you a party! Please Murray is rated as the number 1 state facility and it is my understanding that it actually makes money for the state. All of this is in addition to the fatal blow to the Centralia economy and the possibly unrecoverable loss to more than 500 state employees who work hard and tirelessly for our loved ones. Please, I beg you to reconsider this position Gov. Quinn after you see with your own eyes and hear with your own ears the lives you are affecting!

Thank you all for allowing me this time to voice my opinion!

Sincerely,
Barbara Allen,
Taylorville

Dear Commisioners:

I would like to register my opposition to the closure of Murray Developemental Center. Please consider rejecting Gov. Quinn's recommendation for it's closure. As much as we would all hope for, not all people are capable of living in a community setting. Please speak for these individuals and tell Gov. Quinn that these Special People do matter.

Sincerely,
Pat Kornegger

I have been at Murray Center for 24 years. I have seen a lot of the residents grow from a child to an adult. This has been the only home some of them has known. A lot has family that is no longer able to come visit them, so the staff is family to them. When you have worked out for a long time they are your second family. The residents doesn't deserve to be moved out of the only home some of them have ever known. There are some residents that have tracks and feeding tubes they would not survive in a Nursing Home or a Group Home this residents require too much care which they would receive there. At Murray Center they receive the care the care that they deserve. We have other residents that have come to Murray from Group Homes with extreme behavior problems and since they have come to Murray they have less behavior and can go on home visits now as to where they were not able to. This residents love been at Murray Center. If this residents are put back in Group Homes they will go back to their extreme behavior problems and will not be able to go on home visits. At Murray the residents are able to go to the movies, shopping, bowling, out to eat, have activities on the cottages. the residents look forward to this. Are they going to be able to do all this in a Group Home where there are so many other residents and not enough staff to do activities. We have the staff to do activities and the staff enjoys doing it and watching the residents laugh when they are doing something they enjoy. This residents did not ask to be born the way they are so why take their home from them. They desire to be happy and stay where they are so that they can have a safe and happy life, and they know that they have staff that love them , take care of them, and will be there for them when they are in need. I have enjoyed my 24 years at Murray Center. When a residents passes away is like losing a family member because you care for them so much and what to keep them safe and happy. KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN FOR THE RESIDENTS!!!!!!!!!!!!

Thank You

Deborah Opolony
313 S. Maple
Centralia, Il. 62801

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Amanda Harvey. I am a concerned citizen and the spouse of an employee, writing in opposition to the closing of the Murray Center. The closing would be devastating to the employees, Centralia and most importantly the residents, many who have been there for years. Now they are to be evicted from the only home many of them have known. Moving them away from their home and the people who have become like family to them will surely upset them. They won't understand why they have to leave! I urge you to please take into consideration the feelings of those who call Murray Center their home. Do not close Murray Center for their sake.

Thank You,
Amanda Harvey

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to register my opposition to the closure of Murray Developmental Center.

The majority of the residents at this center are either medically-challenged or behaviorally making them unlikely candidates for placements in CILA homes, group homes, or ICF/DD homes. Staff ratios at these types of homes are not sufficient to care for this very complicated population. Over the course of the last several years, some of our residents have transitioned to these types of homes (CILA, ICF/DD, group) only to return to Murray Center when the staff at these homes are unable to manage their behaviors. Those medically challenged residents would not have the needed medical staff available to them, that Murray Center provides. This would only lower their chance of survival in these types of homes.

This type of population does not adapt well to change. Small changes are very large obstacles for them, setting off behaviors, weight gain/loss, etc. Over half of the population of Murray Center has lived at this center for 20 years or more, with almost 70 pf those residents having lived 40+ years. This would be taking them out of the home they have known for over 40 years.

The economic impact of the closure of Murray Center would be huge, as it is the third largest employer in this area. The present unemployment is already an astounding 11.5% in Marion County. The center's closure would force unemployment even higher; affecting businesses and services in the area. Many businesses would not survive, which in turn would cause more unemployment in this already economically depressed area.

Please consider these facts before making a decision to close Murray Center.

Submitted by:

Pamela J. Lambert
1005 West 7th Street
Centralia, IL 62801

My name is Debra Worlds and I work at Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. I am a Registered Nurse and have worked at Murray Center for 24 years. I am writing a statement to ask you to please consider not closing Murray Center. Murray Center has been home for some since Murray Center open in 1964. That is a long time. It would be a shame to put these individuals out. I love my job and the people I serve. Please keep Murray Center open.

I would like to submit this statement at the COGFA hearing that will be held this April in Centralia, Illinois.

When I think about the possible closure of Warren G. Murray Center, the only word that comes to mind is devastating.

This would be devastating to the 276 "adult children" who reside there and have for most of their lives. Change is devastating to these people. The care they receive there cannot be matched anywhere, and I see no reason to try.

This would be devastating to the parents and guardians of the residents. Most have moved here to be near their loved one. What now? As the parents and guardians age, they have less transportation means available. How do they stay close with their child? Where do they place their child with severe mental and physical disabilities? How do you find a safe place?

This would be devastating to the over 500 employees of Warren G. Murray Center. Besides losing a job in a town that has watched most of the industries leave or fold, they genuinely care about the residents in their charge.

And lastly, it would be devastating for the City of Centralia and surrounding cities. We have NO jobs. The trickle down effect will put the last nail in the city's coffin.

We, the citizens of Centralia, have been given no reasonable reason for this closure.

Is there one?

Respectfully,
Cynthia S. Moore
218 West Kerr
Centralia, Illinois 62801

My name is Thomas J. Harvey. I am a Mental Health Technician for the State of Illinois at the Warren G. Murray Center that has been targeted for closure. I oppose this decision based not only the residents at the center and it's employees, but also to the fact that the State is trying to balance it's budget on the backs of those that have little to no voice within the state. Murray Center has been home to many of these individuals their entire lives and a drastic change for some would be quite devastating. Granted there are some individuals that could and would make such a transition but what of those who could not? Collateral Damage? Is the budget that we are trying so hard to balance worth the life of one individual? 10 individuals? I think not and I'm sure that the State should and could look at other options to balancing it's budget. I know the decision that you have to make is not an easy one but before you decide ask yourselves, What if this was my son or daughter? What if it was my home.....they were taking away from me? I'm not only asking for you to save the Warren G. Murray Center but to also save the lives of those individuals that we have placed there.

Sincerely
Thomas J Harvey

To Whom It May Concern,

As a former employee at Murray's Children Center during my formative junior college years, I was greatly influenced to work with special children like the ones I worked with at Murray's. In fact, I was motivated to pursue my educational career in special education due to my time spent as a volunteer writing letters home for the kids, next as a teachers aide in the education program and finally as an aide in one of the cottages before going away to a four year college. I then spent 35 years in the special education field (I retired last year) and during that time I was blessed to touched many many lives because of my time spent with the children at Murray. I hate to think of the lives that would not be the same if I had not started at Murray and pursued a career in special education.

As a former Centralian I have personally witnessed what the closure of businesses has done to this town. From the factories to the railroad yards, this town has been decimated. The town is a shadow of its former self and to lose Murray's Children Center would be like the nail in the coffin. Please reconsider what devastating consequences this closure would have on this community.

Sincerely...
Diane Lambert Holt



Sun-Tec, Inc.
539 S. Poplar Street
Centralia, IL 62801

March 23, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Warren G. Murray Development Center

Dear Commissioners:

Please accept this letter as support for the ongoing opposition to the closure of Warren G. Murray Development Center in Centralia, IL. This center serves as home to 276 residents and provides employment for 600 residents from the local region.

As the president of a small, woman-owned, local corporation, I know the impact this will have on our already economically depressed region. Many long-time employees will be forced to sell their homes and move from this area in search of employment. We have already lost more than our share of jobs from this area. Not only does this affect the employees directly, but trickles down to every local business in lost sales, and the local government in lost tax revenue.

As a former educator, I also know the impact this will have on the residents of the facility. These are individuals who are not able to advocate for themselves, so they depend on the rest of us to be their voices.

As a resident of Southern Illinois, I realize that the State of Illinois is in a financial crisis. Southern Illinois has been in financial crisis for a long time! However, there has to be a better way of solving the financial problems we all face than to close this facility.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Dillingham, CAPS
Sun-Tec, Inc.
debbied53@sbcglobal.net

I am a registered nurse at Murray Center. Ive worked there nearly 9 years. I work on Elm Cottage. We care for the most medically challenged individuals. They require 24 hour care. They cant feed themselves. Many are fed per Gastrostomy tubes. They are unable to do any basic care such as bathing and toileting or even reposition themselves. The State of Illinois ... for years have set standards for the level of care these individuals should get- and clearly we have done excellent in providing such care. How dare the State of Illinois evict these people from their homes and expect them to live with a much more lower standard of care? Over the years Ive seen "transition" happen... When we discharge our individuals to Nursing homes or Cilas...they die! And its usually within months. Please dont take away their homes.

Bobbi Gormann RN

To the Commission:

My name is Megan Livesay. I'm almost 21 years old and live in Centralia. I am opposed to closure of Murray Center. At the present time I am a student at our local community college. While I'm not sure if I ever want to work at Murray Center, I think it's very important to keep it open and operational. When I graduate and start to look for full time employment in my hometown, I do not want to have to compete with an additional 550 displaced employees from Murray Center. If Murray Center closes, it will most certainly limit the options for my future as well as the futures of all the other young adults in this area.

Besides, the Murray Center is a home for all those people who live there. It is just wrong to evict those people for no valid reason. Surely the State of Illinois could find some savings in other areas without having to close Murray Center.

Please make a recommendation to the Governor to keep Murray Center open.

Megan Livesay
Centralia, IL

To the Commission:

My name is Zane Mitchell. I'm almost 17 years old and live in Centralia. I am opposed to closure of Murray Center. At the present time I am a student at our local community High School. While I'm not sure if I ever want to work at Murray Center, I think it's very important to keep it open and operational. When I graduate and start to look for full time employment in my hometown, I do not want to have to compete with an additional 550 displaced employees from Murray Center. If Murray Center closes, it

will most certainly limit the options for my future as well as the futures of all the other young adults in this area. It will also put many of my friends and family out of jobs.

Besides, the Murray Center is a home for all those people who live there. It is just wrong to evict those people for no valid reason. Surely the State of Illinois could find some savings in other areas without having to close Murray Center.

Please make a recommendation to the Governor to keep Murray Center open.

Zane Mitchell
Centralia, IL

To members of the Commission:

My name is Dustin Barton. I am 18 years old and a senior in high school. After graduation, I intend to go to college at our local community college to prepare myself for a decent full time job. While I do not know if I ever want to work at Murray Center, I do know there is already a lot of competition for the few jobs in this area. I do not want to compete for a job with an additional 550 displaced Murray Center employees.

Please keep Murray Center open. Those people need their homes and jobs. Thank you.

Dustin Barton
Centralia, IL

Murray has provided wonderful care for my uncle, Wayne for over 46 years. Many of the residents, like Wayne, have been there much of their lives as Murray originally opened as a children's facility. My parents have kept Wayne at Murray despite a drive of 250 miles because of the quality care he receives. He is in a supportive environment with caring staff and is well cared for.

Wayne has many medical and physical issues in addition to his developmental disability. He also has significant respiratory issues. Wayne is totally reliant on others for all of his needs and to keep him safe. He does not speak and has limited awareness of his surroundings. Murray provides 24 hour nursing care and the doctor

visits daily. This level of care is critically important for Wayne and others like him with so many physical and medical issues.

Wayne uses a padded wheelchair that has molding and is specially fitted for him. It keeps him sitting in an upright midline position. It helps to keep his lungs as open as possible to help his breathing and the molding helps to prevent sores. Keeping him properly positioned also helps to decrease the risk of choking. Wayne appears comfortable in his chair. That is quite significant when you realize just how contorted his body is. The wheelchairs are very well made and maintained by a machinist and a wheelchair carpenter at Murray Center.

Although I realize that budgets must be cut, I believe that closing Murray Center is a great disservice to the developmentally disabled citizens of our state. As places like Murray close there are fewer and fewer options for appropriate placement. This closure displaces 275 developmentally disabled individuals. Add to that the Howe Developmental Center two years ago and Jacksonville Developmental Center and the placement options to a state facility equipped to handle the needs of these vulnerable individuals diminish significantly.

Wayne and others like him are not appropriate for community-based care. Caring for these individuals is very labor intensive. I believe moving to a community based placement creates an increased risk for abuse and neglect. How will these small facilities manage the many needs of this population? Murray has many on site resources that can be shared such as staff, equipment and buildings such as a gym and pool. Murray has many professionals that have clinics on the grounds reducing the need to provide staff and transport these individuals to their many appointments. They have a physical therapist with aids on staff. Murray has much of its own equipment including its own x-ray, mammogram, EKG, and specialized physical therapy equipment. The lab even comes to Murray to draw blood.

If community based care is the only option, how will people like Wayne make it to the many appointments necessary for their care? What additional costs will be incurred transporting these individuals to their appointments? How will they manage behavior problems? If placement is available at another state facility providing a similar level of care will there be issues related to overcrowding?

I strongly urge you to support keeping the Murray Center open. In addition to the effect on its residents many hundreds of people will be out of work. Unemployment in Centralia is 11.5%. This will be devastating to Centralia and the surrounding communities.

Please keep Murray Center open. It is a facility that provides excellent compassionate care for the individuals it serves. Wayne is happy in his home of 46 years. It is a wonderful environment for him.

Thank you,

Karen Stengler

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Loretta Arnold and I have been employed with Warren G. Murray Developmental Center for over 17 years. When I first started at Murray Center I have never been in contact or around anyone with developmental disabilities so therefore I never understood their needs or capabilities. In my time there I have worked with the very high level people all the way down to the most medical clients. And let me tell each and everyone of you that they are people and they do count and they do have and show feelings and emotions just as you, your children or I would. If they hurt, they cry. If they are happy they will laugh and smile. Some of the people that live there do have family members that are very involved, but there are others whom have no family and all of the staff that work there are their family members and treat them as such. I have laughed, cried and played with many of these people just as if they were my own family. The people that work there know when they are happy, sick or in need of something because they are with them so much. As a matter of fact there are times they spend more time with the people that live at Murray Center than with their own families. Weekdays, weekends and holidays. How many days have you ever given up from your families to spend at a facility such as Murray Center? We have watched some pass away and who do you think attends their funerals? The staff from Murray Center!!!! With eyes filled with tears because of the devotion they have given to these people.

The impact of closing Murray Center would not only devastate the people that live there, but it would also devastate the employees and the community. There are entire families that work at Murray Center and depend on their jobs and the benefits it provides for their families. I know this first hand as I am an employee that depends on the insurance benefits for my family. My husband and I own a business here in Centralia that his father started over 50 years ago, but I'm sure you know that being self employed insurance is outrageous. I have a 23 year old son, twin daughters, one of which has had to have several surgeries on her ears due to busted ear drums and a husband that is a severe diabetic that is insulin dependent along with myself that has to visit an Oncologist on a regular basis. Now how could I afford to pay for all of the surgeries and medication without my benefits? I simply couldn't!

The devastation that closing Murray Center would have on the people that live there and this town along with surrounding communities would be astronomical. Closing would not only kick people out of their homes that have lived there since the facility has opened you will be closing down a lot of other businesses in this area and causing people and families to seek assistance such as public aide.

Hopefully with everything that the families, community, employees and clients have done should show you that they do not want Murray Center to close!

Please from the bottom of all of our hearts keep their home open. Take their needs and their families needs into consideration.

Thank you for you time.

Sincerely,

Loretta Arnold
Storekeeper I
Murray Developmental Center
1535 West McCord
Centralia, Illinois 62801

Governor Quinn,

The harm you are proposing for the city of Centralia and the residents who have depended on the Murray Center since its opening will be catastrophic. As a former employee of the Center in the mid-60's, I saw firsthand how caring and professional the staff was and how proud they were of being able to provide excellent attention and help to those in their care. Families of the hundreds of unfortunate people in the Center over decades had the peace of mind that their loved ones were being looked after by dedicated professionals – for a lifetime if necessary.

Centralia has had a most difficult time in the last 50 years. The Illinois Central Rail Road has shrunk tremendously and Interstates have conveniently skirted Centralia to the benefit of surrounding towns. Odd in light of the town's critical location and longtime support of area politicians of both parties? And now this proposal to 'help' the City of Centralia that will deal yet another blow to Southern Illinois best city? Jobs, jobs, jobs is not just a media phrase casually mouthed in Centralia, and the Murray Center is a key component for Centralia's financial soundness, pride and emergence through this recession.

You can summarily shut down similar institutions from Champaign north without badly harming those towns, but closure of the long-established Murray Center will cause irreparable harm not only to the people of Centralia but to all of southern Illinois and portions of Indiana, Missouri and Kentucky. Your reconsideration of the Center's closure will be greatly appreciated.

Regards,
John B. Randle

228 Shady Oaks Circle
Lake Mary, FL 32746

Hello My name is Bonnie Durbin

I am opposed to the closure of the Murray Center in Centralia. I have an Uncle who resides there his name is Gary and he would have no where else to really turn that will meet his needs. Murray Center is a wonderful place for our family members with severe disabilities. I wish to make a plea with the governor not to close this facility it will put my grandmother at ease and alot of other families as well so please we ask and beg of you not to close this home to hundreds and jobs as well. My grandmother who is Gary's mother is a RN at ST.JOHNS medical center in Springfield, she works very hard she helps hundreds a day & she does her best with Gary when he comes for a home visit but it just is not the same to him he loves Murray as much as we do they are wonderful so once again please try to look over this and put these families at ease thank you.

Sincerely

Bonnie Durbin

3/22/12

Public Comment regarding the closure of the Murray Center

by Gerald and Jeanne Haar

This statement is written on behave of Brian Haar, a special needs individual living at the Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois.

We are the parents of Brian Haar and we oppose the closing of the Murray Center.

Brian was born with a diagnosis of Down's Syndrome. He now is an adult with a mental age of 17 months. He is severely retarded and is considered developmentally disabled. In addition he has many physical limitations. One example, he has difficulty communicating because he cannot speak. As he grew older at the Murray Center he has acquired additional health problems. He requires a feeding tube and suffers from respiratory problems. It is also not unusual for Brian to require hospitalization several

times year. Brian is total care. He relies on the devoted staff of the Murray Center for all his basic care needs.

We would like to provide the Commission with a perspective into what the closing of the Murray Center would mean to our son Brian and the other residents at the Murray Center. It is our intent to give you some in-sight regarding the depth of the impact upon Brian and the others residents because they are developmentally disabled. The Commission needs to understand, from a resident's perspective, what they will undergo if they are moved to another community setting.

Residents of the Murray Center do not live a "normal" life as we know it. Considering most of the residents have never made a decision on their own in their life. It is their mental and physical conditions which limits most of them from doing this. Other people must make their choices for them: what clothes they will wear, when and what they will eat, which medications they need to take, when they will go to bed at night, where they will sit in the lounge, which music they will listen to. etc.etc. Other people makes these choices for them because they are incapable to make these choices themselves.

Due to their developmental disability they are also not flexible to behavioral or environmental change. Because of their disabilities they have a hard time adjusting to change. Their daily routine of living is set in stone. Their lives are very structured. To make a simple change in their daily routine at Murray, where they have a caring support system, is very difficult and upsetting to them. Ask the staff at the Murray Center. They know the residents best. They will confirm this.

I cannot imagine how upsetting it will be for Brian and the other residents to be placed in a totally strange environment. To have a special needs resident move to another community care setting would be traumatic.

On a personal level, if they are moved, their mind set would be subject to additional mental "Anguish". We chose the word "Anguish" very carefully because it defines a state of pain, distress, anxiety and sorrow. This will be their frame of mind. They will be upset, agitated and unhappy for a long period of time because they cannot understand "what" is happening to them. The residents of Murray will not adjust to a new environmental setting well.

Most of the residents live only for the current moment. They understand only the current moment. They can react only to their immediate situation by expressing their "feelings". They will act out. When a resident acts out they usually are not happy. They cannot rationalize or understand the "why" of what is happening to them. When they are confronted with something they do not understand they will express negative behavior. If they are confronted with a lot of changes at one time they will be upset most of the time and experience "mental anguish". A setting change will have a negative affect on their overall quality of life. Should a developmentally disabled person have a right to be protected from additional mental anguish? Should they not have the opportunity to be "happy"?

The mental anguish of a transition to a different setting would not be for a few weeks or months. This mental anguish could last years for some residents. Let us give you one simple example how ridged our son is: when Brian comes home for a visit he will only sit on the right side of the couch in the family room. He becomes very upset if anyone tries to place him elsewhere. If someone else is sitting in "his space" he becomes agitated and will physically try to move them. The point we are trying to make is – this is how he is, he has done this for over thirty years. No exceptions. If his behavior is that ridged over a seat on the couch how would you think his quality of life will be when he tries to adjust to an entirely new community placement environment where his entire daily routine would be up side down? I predict his future life will be a private hell.

Think about the last time you were upset. Think about your state of mind. Eventually, a normal people will analyze the situation, adjust and move on within a short period of time. A developmentally disabled resident usually doesn't have the ability to do this. Their mental state of mind can get "stuck" in a negative frame of mind for an extended period of time. They are unable to move on easily. Therefore, there is a continuous state of mental anguish. It is extremely important to them that they maintain their current stable life at the Murray Center.

We realize this analogy may not make much of an impression on you. The Commission may consider the personal private life of a developmentally disabled person trivial compared to handling of the Illinois debt crisis. However, this will be their life if they are moved. Their life will be "hell" and they will not know how to handle it. The staff/employees will not be able to help much because this is who they are - they are developmentally disabled. The Commission needs to know - They are very fragile.

You will make your advisory recommendation to the Governor on their behave. You are their only hope. The Governor has already made his uninformed decision. As members of the Commission you have this responsibility. We implore you to be truthful to your personal principles, values and beliefs. Apply common sense. Consider what is honest and fair. Take politic out of it. Govern in a responsible way for all the people of Illinois, and in particular, for the residents and employees of the Murray Center.

We respectfully submit this statement for the Commission's consideration.

Gerald Haar and Jeanne Haar
Parents of Brian Haar

TO THE COMMISSION,

I am petitioning you to keep the Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois open for the almost 300 residents that call it their HOME!

This is a community –a family—and has been my brother's home for 47 years. I was 14 years old when my brother, at age two was stricken with post infectious encephalitis resulting in severe brain damage. I watched him suffer a fever of 108 for over a week that left him unable to walk or talk. He is also visually impaired and at the age of 53 has an intelligence of about an 11 month old baby.

My brother was hospitalized for 14 months and finally brought home to his other 3 siblings. At age 4 he was given the chance to have a new home at Lincoln. But we were thrilled when the Warren G. Murray Children's Center opened two years later and he could be closer to us in Belleville. My parents made a hard decision to place my brother, but felt it was in his best interest as well as his siblings.

It WAS the best decision! Gregg has blossomed under Murray's care. This facility is a community of caring, trained employees who do an unbelievable job. Many of the residents need full time nurses or medical aides at all times. Some can have behaviors that could harm themselves or others. These "least of our brethren" have called Murray their home through a stable environment that the community or foster homes could not possibly offer.

This sanctuary for our loved ones has been their home for over four decades, giving relief and comfort to families who fought their own sorrow and grief. My mother began the first Murray Parent's Association in her living room 40 years ago. She has continued to be an advocate, not just for my brother, but for all the residents at the Murray Center. At age 87, she should not have to worry about him being moved to a new and frightening place where his care would be far less than excellent. This will be devastating to my brother and the other residents. Community placement is something Gregg already has—at the Murray Center! These "forever children" need to be first and foremost on your minds. Not as a money-saving commodity, but as human beings that need you to do the humanitarian thing. ARC is advising the Governor in the wrong direction. The children they advocate community living for are at a much higher developmental level than the residents of Murray. I devoted my life to the education of the children of Illinois with 17 years teaching special children and 17 allowing the integrations of special students to benefit from classes within my regular Grades one and two. This included a blind student. I know very well the differences between students able to handle integration with the normal population and those who are too severe to do so. Do NOT close the Murray Center!

In addition, over 500 staff and workers would lose their jobs in a town that cannot absorb that kind of loss. These families own homes, shop, send their kids to the local schools, worship and participate in life in the town of Centralia. There is no other place for them to get another job and sustain their families. The economy of Southern Illinois is a weak one to say the least. Please consider their lives, as well. They give so much to our loved ones. Don't close the Murray Center!

Another consideration is the financial problems of the State of Illinois. It is interesting to me that so many cuts are being proposed when the Governor's budget has actually increased! Murray Center is not a great cost to the state due to federal reimbursements and social security received by the residents. It is actually the only center that makes more money than it costs the state to run.

To Governor Quinn and the commissioners, I am desperately requesting that you do the humane thing and guarantee these severe and profound residents and their parents and families a premiere place to reside while considering the faltering economy of this area.

Thank you,
Cynthia A. Evans

Keep Murray Center Open

Murray Center provides excellent care to approximately 280 special need residents. These patients can't care for themselves. They suffer from PICA, brittle bone syndrome, and aggressive behaviors. PICA patients pick up and eat whatever is near. Those suffering brittle bone syndrome easily break bones if not protected. Aggressive patients may be predisposed to attack others. Some individuals with progressive deterioration can't move themselves and must be repositioned every two hours to prevent bedsores. The 550 staff at Murray Center provide care other facilities can't. Many of Murray's patients come from other institutions that can't handle them or care for them properly. Some live well past their projected life span due to Murray's care.

Governor Quinn will cancel Murray's essential services and place the residents in (CILLA) smaller facilities. Quinn's plan won't work. First, smaller facilities have one or two staff. They will be unable to provide the 24 hour care to patients needing repositioning every 2 hours to prevent bed sores while caring for all. Secondly, aggressive personalities must always be handled by two staff. What happens to the thirteen other patients needing oversight while two staff assist one resident? Thirdly, Murray Center provides 24 hour security, nursing care, and building maintenance. This 24 hour coverage is logistically impossible in small facilities. Governor Quinn's plan is unworkable. Quinn might be compared to an absentee landlord with little understanding of Murray Center clients. Quinn fails to grasp the harm closing Murray Center poses.

Rev. Dr. Philip W. Chapman
Pastor, Zion UCC, Central City Illinois

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure, Murray Center
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

This is something that I never thought I would have to do. I am writing this letter hoping that it will convince you not to close WARREN G. MURRAY DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER in CENTRALIA, IL. We have approximately two hundred and eighty individuals who reside at this facility. Some of the individuals who live here are diagnosis with severe or mild retardation. Some of residents have medical conditions that require them to live on buildings that have twenty-four nursing staff. We also have individuals that have other conditions that require them to have additional staff assigned to them to ensure that they don't harm themselves or others. We also have people who need adaptive equipment this could range from eating utensils to a specialized wheelchair. Some of our individuals have lived at this facility for all of the forty-six years that it has been open. The state has placed some of our individuals into group homes or less restricted environment, only for several of them to return back to the facility. We have a wide variety of individuals who reside at Murrays and they all have one thing in common. They call Murray Center Home and they should not be uprooted and relocated!!

Murray Center has helped keep the economy positive in the Marion/Clinton county area since the late sixties. If this facility closes it will have a huge negative impact on the financial status of this county and the surrounding counties. This small southern Illinois area cannot afford to lose another business. Yes, the State of IL is suffering from financial difficulty, but closing this facility or other facility will not help the state. CENTRALIA WILL NOT SURVIVE!!!!

I'm asking you to vote NO for closing Murray Center.

Submitted by:
Luberta Lytle
414 E. McCord St.
Centralia, IL 62801

This letter is to bring the closure of the Murray Center in Illinois to your attention. I am opposed to the this closing and would like you to inform your governor. Please recommend this closure be stopped! Murray Center is a home for the disabled and should not be closed! Thank you for your time.

Robin Phillips

March 26, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Wayne Houser. I am e-mailing you today regarding the Warren G. Murray Center of Centralia, IL. I am opposed to the closure of this facility. This is a written statement regarding this issue. I understand that the State of Illinois has a tremendous revenue shortfall and needs to reassess and realign costs and benefits of the services rendered. Those same costs do not factor in the human costs associated with the decisions that are rendered. I would like for you the commissioners to consider these human factors and all the consequences before rendering your decision. Many times cost cutting by eliminating jobs is an excellent strategy for a business, however, this same approach in public policy arenas is often counter productive. Job elimination often results in further budgetary difficulties as these tax payers find it necessary to relocate to other states to find employment. Leaving the communities and the state with additional lost revenues putting greater strain on both.

I also have a few questions to ask regarding the potential future of this Center. If the State of Illinois wants to eliminate or lower the operational expenses of these types of centers, has the idea been presented regarding the possibility of having a public-private partnership phased in to take over the operations and retain the homes of these individuals? If we continue to eliminate jobs, are we actually doing anything positive to help ourselves out of this economic hardship? We need jobs for our communities and our state to recapture our tax base. Please try to think outside the box for ways to help us to help ourselves.

Thank you.

Regards,

Wayne N. Houser

3/25/2012

Public Comment regarding the closure of the Murray Center

by Gerald and Jeanne Haar

This statement is written on behave of Brian Haar, a special needs individual living at the Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois.

We are the parents of Brian Haar and we oppose the closing of the Murray Center.

Brian was born with a diagnosis of Down's Syndrome. He now is an adult with a mental age of 17 months. He is severely retarded and is considered developmentally disabled. In addition he has many physical limitations. One example, he has difficulty communicating because he cannot speak. As he grew older at the Murray Center he has acquired additional health problems. He requires a feeding tube and suffers from respiratory problems. It is also not unusual for Brian to require hospitalization several times a year. He also relies on the devoted staff of the Murray Center for all his basic care needs like bathing, grooming, dressing, toileting, etc. Brian is total care.

As parents of Brian, we are concerned about what will happen to him if the Murray Center closes. He has special care needs. We are faced with the fact that Brian's home may close. Knowing of this possibility we must do what we can to help Brian remain at the Murray Center but also prepare for the future. As parents, our underlying concern/question is – If the Murray Center closes which community placement can best address his care needs? And second, we also have concerns of what we foresee as his future.

I am a retired licensed nursing home administrator. My 35+ year management and consulting career in the long term care industry included nursing homes, both skilled and intermediate facilities, and a DD facility, like Murray, in the State of Illinois. I do not pretend to know everything. I only present these credentials to let you know I understand the long term care process of both geriatrics and the developmentally disabled. I have experience with how the entire care delivery system works.

Our intention is to offer an abbreviated version, but hopefully accurate one, of the general services and programming of each different type of Brian's future possible placement options.

Analysis of Services Provided

The only way to determine an appropriate placement for a resident is to assess each resident care needs and match it to services and programming offered by a particular placement option.

Lets begin with an overview of the different type of services and programing each different placement

options could offers Brian.

In general, each option offers services and programming that meets the requirements of the resident population they desire to serve. Each has a unique care model. Therefore, each facility has a general profile that can be used for comparison purposes.

Nursing Homes

Main focus is to address acute and chronic physical health care needs of geriatric residents.

Most facilities offers both intermediate (some health and oversight care needs) and skilled care (more heavy level of nursing care that addresses chronic and some acute health problems). The staff requires a special skill set to care for this type of resident.

Nursing Homes do not offer developmental disabled services. DD services require an entirely different type of care programming. This is why the State of Illinois offers two different types of licenses. The care approach to treat a geriatric resident in a nursing home is totally different than the treatment requirements of a DD resident.

If a resident has any developmental care needs a nursing home may not be an appropriate placement because they do not offer these services.

CILA Facility

CILAs is a new care delivery model trend for the Developmentally Disabled. With any new model it takes time to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of how it fits into the overall care delivery system. One size doesn't fit all.

CLIsAs care setting serves a small number of residents. The care setting is usually a small facility (house) located in a residential neighborhood of a community.

CILAs offer developmental programming

CILAs prefers to admit residents without physical health care needs.

CILAS promote a more "home like" atmosphere.

All of these components are very favorable for the treatment of a particular type of resident who are slightly or moderately developmentally impaired. These residents fits well into the CILAs setting.

The scope of care needs a CILA can care for is mostly limited to this type of resident.

The staff of a CILAs is not trained or equipped to care for heavy physical health needs.

Heavy health care is not compatible to their care or business model.

Murphy Center

Murray offers developmental program services. This is their main care focus.

Murray also offers extensive physical health care services. Even with their main focus being developmental programming, Murray was forced to address physical health care needs because over the years many of their residents “aged in place” within the facility. As a person ages it is normal for them to develop more physical health problems. Murray has already made the transitions to heavy physical care services.

Service Focus Summary - Nursing Homes main focus is geriatric health care. CILAS main focus is developmental and some light oversight health care. The Murray Center main focus is developmental with both light and heavy health care.

Appropriate Placement Requirements

The objective of an appropriate placement is to match the capability of the facility to meet a resident's care requirements with an individual resident's care needs.

From the services perspective:

Nursing homes are not an appropriate placement because they do not offer any developmental programming. This inappropriate placement would mean a resident would not reach their full potential and therefore more dependent on the health care system in the future.

CILAs may be appropriate for only a limited number of Murray's residents. However, they are not equipped to accept heavy health care. In addition, there should be a future concern if CILAs can meet care requirements as their residents age in place). To care for heavier health care needs in a small community settings seems to be prohibited from a care delivery model and cost standpoints.

Murray Center is an appropriate placement because they already care for these residents.

From the resident's perspective:

Only a detailed assessment of the resident's care needs of Murray residents can determine an appropriate placement.

Most of the residents I have observed over the years at the Murray Center are not of the moderate to slightly impaired type. I see a lot of heavy care residents. These residents have many physical health issues. I also see residents with severe behavioral problems. These are residents whose problems are more than a resident just having a bad day once in a while. These are residents with defined behavioral issues and diagnoses.

Residents with these type of needs do not fit well into CILAs. These resident's care requirements do not match well with the "care model" that CILAs promote. In fact, most CILAs do not want these type of residents.

We would encourage the Commission to contact several CILA operators and ask him/her the following questions:

What are the typical care needs that your Admission Coordinator looks for when considering a placement?

What are the particular health care limitations that would disqualify a person for placement?

Give him/her my son's care needs listed in the first paragraph of this document and ask if they could handle his developmental and health care needs. Would they admit him?

If he or she answers Yes – ask him if his/her reimbursement rate would cover the cost of my son's care. An proprietary CILA will not admit many residents without the possibility of making a profit. These facilities are not like the Murray Center who also have a moral obligation to take care of their disabled citizens.

If he or she answers Yes to both the care and cost questions – Do not trust him/her.

The care model concept of CILAs is great. However, it is only practical for a limited number of people. The Murray Center addresses many more health care needs than a CILA can provide.

In the end, an appropriate and responsible placement for many residents at the Murray Center will be difficult.

Our Perspective of Brian's Future

The State of Illinois can "just dump" a resident into an inappropriate placement. The closing of the Murray Center is a step by step process. The process begins with the advisory commission recommending closure and the Governor accepting the recommendation. If this happens there will be a token attempt to make appropriate placements. Some of the placements may be appropriate.

However, both heavy developmental, behavioral, and health care residents will be hard to place and eventually they will be “dumped somewhere” because at the end of the process, all of Murray's residents must leave. The closure process guarantees inappropriate placements.

Everyone will have good intentions but for the unfortunate ones, they will be placed in a facility where their needs will not be met for the rest of their lives. I believe the State of Illinois has a moral responsibility to care for their most vulnerable citizens. This is one of the reasons why government should exist. I sincerely hope it will never reach this point. However as parents of a heavy care resident, we foresee this happening to our son.

Our Request

The bottom line is, the Murphy Center is the only place where all care needs can be addressed with quality care. The parents are satisfied with the care currently given at Murray. Staying at Murray would allow Brian and the other residents to live the rest of their lives in a safe home like environment.

As we all grow older, isn't this what we all should be blessed with? Doesn't the residents at Murray deserve this same future?

You will make your advisory recommendation to the Governor on the resident's behalf. You are their only hope. The Governor has already made his uninformed decision. As members of the Commission you have this responsibility. We implore you to be truthful to your personal principles, values and beliefs. Apply common sense. Consider what is honest and fair. Take politics out of it. Govern in a responsible way for all the people of Illinois, and in particular, for the residents and employees of the Murray Center.

We respectfully submit this statement for the Commission's consideration.

Gerald Haar and Jeanne Haar - Parents of Brian Haar

Please keep the Murray Center open. It is the home of dear ones that can't advocate for themselves. Please!

Janalyn Finch

I've been employed at Murray Center for about 35 years; 24 of which I worked as a Mental Health Technician. I provided direct care for many mentally disabled individuals. They needed my assistance with every aspect of their daily lives: dressing, eating, grooming, showering, toileting, and communicating. They were my second family. 35 years ago, Murray Center had huge cages in the inner circle to house zoo animals. We had lions, tigers and bears-oh my. They brought the Zoo to us. We have our own in-ground swimming pool, patios equipped with a basketball hoop, golf carts, and a playground.

I went back to school and earned my degree in Psychology from SIUE at Edwardsville. I now hold the position of HPC so I've experienced a couple of perspectives of life at Murray Center. My job is to incorporate an individualized plan to fulfill each person's needs utilizing the expertise of many disciplines: Technicians, Nursing, Speech & Hearing, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Behavior Analyst, Dietician, Dental, Activity Therapy, & Vocational. We also have our own Physicians and Pharmacist and Dentist.

Murray Center has so much to offer mentally and physically and behaviorally challenged individuals. The Center is well equipped to meet each individual need, The professional staff together with direct care staff find solutions to many complex problems. Communication is key. Through trial and error, the techs are able to communicate with and understand the individuals they take care of on a daily basis. It is quite amazing to see blind/deaf persons express their needs and be understood.

Our population may receive basic care in the community but they will never receive all that Murray Center has to offer.

Terrie Voss

Please keep the Murray Center open! These residents have specific needs that cannot be met in a community setting. Please, please reconsider making these residents move to a new place when many have called this center home for many years. Thank you!

George and Peggy Gasparich

Pleased be advised that I am highly opposed to the closure of the Murray Center. My friend has a relative that has lived almost his entire life there. This person needs the care he receives there. It would be not only inhumane but also immoral to expect this person to have to adjust to a different facility after so long. How would you feel if someone decided to close your home and make you move somewhere else? I would guess you would not like this and you probably don't even have special care needs. Please reconsider this closure. Surely funding can be made available somehow. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Sherry L. Coleman

Dear Sir,

Please accept this as a plea to keep open the Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. Since 1964 the Murray Center has provided and a home to so many disabled individuals who need the care and skilled services its staff and facility provides. To most, it is the only home they have and know. Please keep this facility open and running in our state.

Thank you,
Sandra Basler

I have 2 sisters who currently reside at Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois. I am gravely concerned about what will happen to them if Governor Quinn closes this center in 2013 as he has proposed.

My sister Madonna is 55 years old and has lived at Murray for almost 30 years. Previously she lived in 3 different small facilities in Missouri, and we were very pleased with her care. There came a time when Illinois was no longer willing to pay for her care in Missouri, and my parents were forced to find a facility in Illinois that had the same level of care. Finding Murray was the answer to our prayers.

In 2001, Madonna was found to have Rett Syndrome, a somewhat rare genetic defect. She became part of a nationwide study for 3 years at Rush University Hospital in Chicago. Once a year for 3 years, she was examined and evaluated. The doctors told us every year that they wished all the "girls" in the study had the extensive documentation Murray supplied! Her participation in the study was prized. Most Rett "girls" have a life span of around 40 years. Because of the excellent care Madonna has received at Murray, she has far surpassed that! The progression of Rett Syndrome involves a slow deterioration of all abilities, including the ability to move and eat. Madonna has one of the wheelchairs that are individually designed and built for residents at Murray because she can no longer move. Will she get this in the community? No! She is on a soft food or mashed diet that is calorie controlled because she has lost her ability to chew. Most Rett Syndrome patients die of suffocation because their muscles no longer

support their frame. Too much weight hampers the already poor muscle support. What will happen to my fragile sister when she is removed from the care that is keeping her alive at Murray? It's a frightening thought!

My second sister Angela is 47. She, too, was in other "group homes" in the area. She was physically abused in at least one of these homes, and was never happy in any of them. Each home could not meet her needs and asked the family to find another placement. The last time this happened, we felt we had run out of options, but again our prayers were answered when Murray took her as an emergency placement.

She likes her home at Murray. Angie has different problems than Madonna but receives equally great care. She is developmentally disabled and has been diagnosed at various times with a behavior disorder, schizophrenia, tardive dyskinesia, endometrial cancer and osteoporosis. Currently she has a fractured and dislocated hip. I don't know what we would have done without the skilled nursing care at Murray! Again, it is frightening to think what will happen to her if she loses her home and is placed back into an environment that has already failed her.

Please don't let my sisters become an unfortunate outcome of a faulty attempt to save money. Closing Murray, which makes a profit for the state is unconscionable!

Gayle Munie
7937 Ingram Road
Rockford, Illinois 61108

COFGA MEMBERS:

I am against the Governors decision to close Murray Center in Centralia, IL. I am an employee at Murray Center and have been since 1979. As you can imagine, I have seen a lot of changes over the years of my employment at Murray Center, but one thing has never changed. It is one of the best places in the state and probably in the country for taking care of developmentally disabled residents. The staff genuinely cares about the residents and in many cases; we are the only family they have ever known. They depend on us to take care of them and now they are depending on us to speak for them and to beg you to save their home. I have seen residents that have been sent to supposedly better placement in group homes start exhibiting behaviors they never had here at Murray. I have seen them become extremely self abusive. One of the men on my unit was sent on many trial visits before being permanently placed in the group home they had chosen for him. After each trial visit, he came back clawed up. He had never been self abusive on my unit, but literally clawed himself up when sent to his "better placement." He was non verbal, but made it very clear that he preferred not to go. He was given no choice, just as our residents now are being given no choice. Another male on my unit was also sent to "better placement." This resident was able to talk and make his wishes known. He was also sent on several trial

visits. Each time he returned, he excitedly greeted staff and told us, "I'm home now." He said he didn't want to go, but his wishes were disregarded by his state guardian that had only met him once, and he too was sent to a group home. When he left Murray, he could stand up and pivot into his wheelchair. He could use the toilet. He was happy. The last time I visited him, he could no longer stand at all. He could no longer sit on the toilet. He told me, "I want to go home now." He cussed out every staff person from his new home that walked in the room while I was there. He was obviously not happy. I also know of at least two former residents of Murray Center, that died after being sent away to new homes. I hope you will do the right thing and recommend keeping Murray Center open. I'd hate to see any more of our residents fall victim to a system that puts money before people. I am about to retire, so monetarily the closure of Murray Center will not affect me personally. It will devastate our residents. Please help them.

Sincerely,

Lisa Howell

The closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia would be a devastating blow to the small southern Illinois community and the many families living in the area for two crucial reasons. First, the Center is a major employer in the Centralia area, which has seen so many other closings in the past. Struggling families will be hit hard by the loss of employment, which will then trickle down to other businesses in the area. Second, families with loved ones living in the center will be at a loss in the care of their family member, making a bad situation even worse.

Keep Southern Illinois' Murray Developmental Center in Centralia up and running for the sake of so many families.

S. J. Siegler

To Whom It May Concern:

I am opposed to the governor's proposal to close Murray Center and our Lab facility. I know the state is broke, but I understand Murray Center obtains federal funding above and beyond the cost of operations. Seems to me that's a good enough reason alone to keep it open. It's profitable. Does it make sense to close a profitable operation? Those people have to live somewhere. Why can't they stay where they are? It's their home! If those people were normal and not disabled people, would the governor allow those special interest groups to try to dictate where they live?

Governor Quinn also wants to close the Lab near Centralia. The building and facility where the lab operates is paid for. We are in the heart of an agricultural area. It does not make sense to close the lab either. Undoubtedly, the Maschoff's likely located their headquarters within 20 miles of the lab because

of the location in relevance to their needs. Why would the governor even consider closing this lab? Why would he consider closing Murray Center? Neither of these proposals makes any sense to me.

As a taxpayer and interested citizen, I think the governor needs to re-think his proposals. The taxpayers own those places - not the governor alone and not any special interest groups. One person (the governor) shouldn't have the sole power to change the lives of so many people depending on his mood. There's just something wrong with that.

Please urge the governor to keep both of these facilities open and operational. Both of them provide needed services for the people in this region. Both are owned by taxpayers, and I'm a taxpayer. As part owner, I don't want to see those places closed.

Jake Barton

Like most people in Southern Illinois, I have become aware of the possibility of the closing of the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

Although I know that you will devote a great amount of time, energy, consideration, and thought in making your decision, I am writing in the hope that I can affect in a small way your final decision which, hopefully, will be to keep Murray Center open.

Centralia, Illinois, where Murray Center is located, can not afford to lose another source of employment for 500-600 employees. During the past generation, Centralia has gone from a thriving industrial city employing hundreds of thousands of employees to a relative small town that has seen the total disappearance of the Illinois Central Railroad Car Shops, the Hollywood Candy Factory, the Centralia Dress Factory, two of the finest clothing stores in Illinois, its downtown Sears store and numerous smaller places of employment.

Obtaining a job in Centralia has for a long time now been more than a lost dream. It has become a total impossibility. In this small town where the unemployment rate is at 11.5 %, there simply is no place to find a job.

Murray Center has an outstanding reputation for providing excellent care for well over 275 unfortunate individuals diagnosed with developmental disabilities and have no place else to go. Also, Murray Center's payroll of 38.1 million plus the untold dollars spent by friends and family members who come to Centralia to visit the more than 275 severely developmentally disabled residents of Murray Center provide badly needed financial assistance to those beleaguered businesses still hanging on within the City of Centralia. The sad truth is that losing Murray Center would be absolutely devastating to not only Centralia but also to a great many smaller towns around Centalia as well.

Where could the 275 severely disabled residents of Murray Center go and receive a similar high level of dedicated treatment and personal care they are now receiving? The answer is nowhere!

Where could the hundreds of employees now working at Murray Center go to find any kind of employment if Murray Center should close and suddenly all these people become unemployed? The answer is nowhere in or around Centralia!

Where would all the local businesses including the gas stations, the shoe stores, the restaurants, the grocery stores, the clothing stores, the bakeries, the auto parts stores, the auto dealers. and a host of similar businesses find new customers to replace those lost due to the impact of closing Murray Center? The answer is nowhere!

For these as well as many, many additional reasons, I am respectfully requesting that Murray Center not be closed.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Carl & Lula Steele
5758 Weymouth Drive
Rockford, Illinois 61114

To Whom It May Concern:

I have a cousin that lives at Murray Center and I am wondering why you want to close it, I don't understand? If you could e-mail me back and please explain why?

I and my family are opposed to the closure of Murray Center and ask you to please don't close it! Not only for the state employees that will loose their job but most important is for the residents not to loose their home. I'm sure you would feel the same way if someone would take your home??? What would you do, think about it??

It doesn't get any easier ... Our determination just has to get stronger for the sake of alot of people that will be involved if it closes...

God Bless Murray Center, its staff and residents!

Thank You
Gary and Gerry Johnson
Foley, AL (From Taylorville, IL)

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
Attention Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

March 28, 2012

Dear Commissioner's:

I'm writing this letter in regards to the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

I have worked at Murray Center for almost 29 years in many capacities. I have been an Activity Therapist, Habilitation Program Coordinator, and Residential Manager. Currently I am the QSP Coordinator (Qualified Support Professional). I am a member the Center's Human Rights Committee, a MANDT Instructor, a Tardive Dyskinesia Rater, and I assist in the Training Department.

During these 29 years, I have worked with many of the people who live at Murray Center. I have seen people move to Community placements; some have been successful and some not resulting in their return to Murray. I have seen people pass away, transfer to other SODC's and many admissions. I have worked with people who were transferred here from Lincoln Developmental Center and Howe Developmental Center when they were closed. I monitored at Lincoln Developmental Center during their closure process. I have always worked on the Residential Buildings with People who display severe behavior problems.

The majority of recent admissions to Murray Center have been people with severe behavioral issues that were living in community settings and the providers were unable to care/provide for them. Some had come from the hospital and some from jail. Often times the Community Provider had to resort to calling the police or have the person admitted to a Psychiatric Unit. There were also times that the Community Provider did not hold that person's bed at the home, giving it to the next person on the waiting list, leaving no place for this person to return to but to be admitted to Murray Center. Many admissions have been Diagnostic Admissions (30-90 days), where the Center's staff worked with the person and the community agency to develop programming, medication protocols, etc, only for the community provider not to take the person back to that home.

Murray Center provides Psychiatric, Medical, Speech, Hearing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Vocational Training, Nutritional, Pharmacy, Activity Therapy and Social Services. We provide 24 hr Nursing and Physician care. We have Direct Support Professionals 24/7 at the needed staffing levels. We provide food services 7 days a week, on grounds Vocational Programming 5 days a week and an Activity Center accessible 7 days a week. A variety of Religious opportunities are offered both on and off campus. We have an extensive Training Department also. The Vocational Program operates "The Bistro" 2 days a week with those that work at the Vocational Program work.

Murray utilizes the community frequently. Restaurants, Movie Theater, Stores, Barbers/Beauticians, Physicians/Hospital, Parks, the Community Workshop, Churches and many more.

The People who live at Murray Center consider this their home. They have people to care for them, to love them. Those who have families know their loved one is safe, well cared for, and loved. For those that don't have family, they have their "Murray Family."

Many of us have grown up together at Murray Center, people that live here and staff. We have all watched each other's children grow up. The individuals at Murray have always been a part of everyone's family. We have laughed together, cried together and supported one another in many ways.

Murray Center is a HOME! Sending people to live in the community (where currently there are no available CILA's in the area), could be detrimental for many of these people. Many community providers are not able to care for the medical and behavioral needs of many of these people. Community providers do not provide the staffing numbers, nursing/medical care, staff training or consistent staffing levels these people require. The turnover rate in the community is at a very high level, whereas Murray Center has many committed staff that has been here for 25 plus years.

The closure of Murray Center would be horrible for the surrounding communities, the 550 staff loosing their jobs and no other jobs to be found in this area. But most of all it would be devastating to the people who live here. How do you explain to the people they have to leave their home, loved ones, family and friends?

How do you respond to someone who has said, "What will happen to me? This is the only place I have lived that I have EVER felt loved!"

Please vote to keep Murray Center Open.

Respectfully Yours,

Kathy Shaw
Public Service Administrator
QSP Coordinator
2604 S. Pine Street
Centralia, IL 62801

Dear Commissioners;

My name is Holly Johnson and I am writing this letter as an opponent to the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

I have worked at Murray Center for 24 years. I have worked as a Direct Support Professional, Dietary and currently I am a Pharmacy Technician. In all these positions I have always had contact with the People who live at Murray Center.

Murray Center is a home to people with very special needs. Murray provides love and care to the most vulnerable people. They have formed friendships with their peers and the staff. They feel safe in their home and it would be devastating to them if they were moved out of their homes into CILA's.

The closure would not only severely affect the people who live at Murray Center; it would also be terrible for the 550 employees, their families and the entire Centralia area.

Please vote NO to the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

Respectfully,

Holly Johnson
1577 Zion Hill Rd.
Centralia, IL 62801

Dear Commissioners;

My name is Samantha Bruce and I am writing this letter as an opponent to the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

I have worked at Murray Center for 21 years. I have worked as a Direct Support Professional, Dietary and currently I am a Pharmacy Technician. In all these positions I have always had contact with the People who live at Murray Center.

Murray Center is a very special home to the people that live here. It is not an institution. Those that live at Murray have developed strong relationships with their peers and the staff. It would be devastating to them if they were moved out of their homes into CILA's.

Not only would it be devastating for the People that live at Murray, it would also be devastation to the 550 employees, their families and the entire Centralia area.

Please vote no to the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center.

Respectfully,

Samantha Bruce
503 S. Elm St.
Centralia, IL 62801

I want to share with you my position on the Governor's proposal to close Jacksonville and Murray Developmental Centers. I support the rebalancing of the system for the provision of services to a very vulnerable population. It is well supported in research that people are better served in smaller settings in the community. Most other states closed their institutions years ago. Jacksonville, in particular, is a very old facility in need of many repairs. It still uses coal to power the heating plant. As you may be aware, it is the oldest facility in Illinois, established soon after the 1847 appearance of Dorothea Dix before the Illinois legislature. This is being portrayed as an economic issue and much is made of the perceived loss of jobs. There will be no loss of jobs. If individuals are moved to the community of their choice, staff will still be needed to provide services in smaller settings. The proposal is to plan for each person, the kind of services that will best meet that person's needs. The money saved by the closures must follow the individuals into the community. As the sibling of an individual who experienced both living in a state operated facility and a CILA (Community Integrated Living Arrangement) I can tell you emphatically, there is no comparison. The small group home and workshop in the community where my mother lived provided her with normal living opportunities and relationships that she could never have had otherwise. I strongly urge you to think about the best interests of the people who live in the institution rather than the best interests of the union members and Jacksonville city leaders who have a vested interest in keeping those individuals incarcerated. The arguments in favor of institutional care are frighteningly close to the arguments of those who supported slavery so many years ago. Please listen to the advocates and those who have already moved into the community. It is very frightening for the parents of individuals who are still there to think of their person moving into an as yet unknown setting and they will fight very hard to not need to confront that possibility but I can tell you that when it has happened in the past, even over parental objections, the families often, after a time, say they are so much better served and they wish they had overcome their fear sooner.

Linda Shroyer

Praying for the Murray Center to remain open. My sister-in-law, mentally challenged, was fortunate to be housed in a group home for several years before her passing. Murray Center is vital for the current residents, the employees, and the residents' relatives.

Thank you
Carol Bollman

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to share my opinion that the closure of the Jacksonville and Murray Developmental Centers is a long overdue and positive step forward for Illinois.

These centers are extremely outdated in both treatment protocols and actual facilities. Residents will be far better served in group home environments. My aunt lived in both an institutional setting and in a CILA group home in Monticello - and her experience at the CILA house was a 100 percent improvement over the institution. She was able to experience living in a home with other individuals – sharing meals at a table, and having her own or a shared bedroom, in a neighborhood with a yard. It was so much better than the hospital-like institutional setting; I can't emphasize enough how much more positive that environment was for her and the others in her home.

I urge you to strongly consider what is best for the individuals being cared for – consider how you would feel if it was your family member in question. And please do not be swayed by arguments about job loss. Care for these individuals will still be needed in the same communities. Setting up that care situation and maintaining it will require workers and be good for the economy locally. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or would like to discuss it further.

Kind regards,
Jennifer Sekosky

I am writing you with my experience with Murray Center. I have a beautiful daughter named Dena Rowcliff. Dena was born and diagnosed with mental disabilities. This was a shock to us and the beginning of a long journey. As a baby, she was a lovely little girl who was slow to learn how to walk and talk. As she grew, her learning abilities seemed to diminish and her medical condition worsen. We loved and cared for her until we could no longer give her the care that she was in need of. We were lucky enough find Murray Center, where Dena went to live. This was now her new home and a second loving family developed. She was now getting the professional care she needed. I am not going to list dates of the events since her mother and I divorced during this time and I may not have the dates accurate. I remained close and involved in Dena's life. Visiting her at Murray Center was a pleasurable experience. I could rest assured that Dena was being loved and cared for. Murray Center provided the professional care and many programs, including self help skills training, that she was in need of. She began to flourish, I was kept informed of her progress and all the activities she was involved in. Dena was involved in activities at home and in the community, such as shopping, eating at family restaurants, fishing, looking at Christmas lights, etc. She had become a very happy young lady. Thanks to Murray Center, Dena was later able to return to her first home and family. She had mastered the skills she would not have had without Murray Center. She lived a happy life and sadly passed away May 27, 2011 at age 39. Dena was never forgotten by her second family. Many of the people who loved and cared for her during her years at Murray Center sent their condolences at the time of her services. We owe our peace of mind and Dena's happy successful life to The State of Illinois, Murray Center and their Staff. Murray

Center does make a difference and I pray it remains a part of our community. Please make the right decision and save their home.

Thank You
Herman Rowcliff

H all that is concerned:

I am writing concerning the closure of Murray Center. I have been employed at Murray Center since 1987 as a Registered Nurse, and was shocked at the proposal taken by Gov. Quinn to close this facility. I hope that the committee will stop and consider all of the residents that live at the center and the care that they are currently receiving. The parents of these individual should also be considered and what they too are emotionally coping with at the thought that their family member will be taken out of their home (Murray Center) in which they have thrived, lived, been loved, and nurtured each year of their life. As far as the life and the longevity of these individuals, they have outlived the expected time projected by physicians in their initial placement at this center.

Initially when Gov. Quinn proposed to close the facility it was due to financial reasons, and then last night on the news is was quoted that he was not closing the facility due to financial reasons but due to the longevity care of the individuals who reside at Murray Center. May I add to this that as a nurse I have never seen such superior care taken of people, (and yes these folks are people, it seems that this has been forgotten). Most of these people who reside at Murray cannot voice their complaint to the Governor so they have to count on the employees who spend as much time with these people as they spend with their own family.

Also to be considered is the devastation that would occur to this area and the surrounding counties. As was quoted to me by one of the citizens that even though the center employs over five hundred people you need to consider that these five hundred people have families with a statistical average of 4 people in the family. So when you consider that average it would directly affect over two thousand people in this community. Currently this community has been burdened with an above average of unemployment and, it is not centrally located to an area where employment can be obtained. With the gas prices raising there is even a higher rate of hardship that has been put on the area and to find employment the citizens would have to relocate which would even increase the poverty level of this area.

I hope that you will look at this facility and the way the people who live here have been taken care of over the years of their life. Please consider these people when you make your decision to keep this center open. Thank you for taking your time to read my letter.

Lisa Beckmann
1004 W 4th St.
Centralia, Illinois 62801

Dear Sir or Madame,

I'm writing you to voice my opposition to the closure of Murray Center. Many of the residents and staff are patients of mine and closure would cause significant hardship on them as well as damaging an already depressed economy. I would be willing to cancel patients for that afternoon to testify at the meeting or to testify in writing. We're counting on you to do the right thing and keep Murray Center open.

Sincerely,
Daniel Wolf, OD, FAAO

my name is Christal Highland,

I am sending a letter to you on behalf of my cousin and her son, he has been living at the Murray Center for 20yrs and I am against the closing of Murray Center in Centralia, IL.

I have been supporting everyone at Murray Center for weeks, and my heart goes out to them, if you close my cousin's place of living he won't have anywhere to go

So please for my cousin's sake do not close his home,

I wish you would think again, about what it means to these people to keep their homes open

Christal Highland

COGFA,

I am writing in regards to the proposed closure of Warren G. Murray Center. As a resident and small business owner in Centralia I am extremely opposed to closing the center. While pursuing my bachelor degree in education, I volunteered at Murray Center and I got to know many of the people who call Murray Center home. The center is a home (in every sense of the word) to 275 people. Many have lived there the majority of their lives and that home is all they have ever known. Closing their home would not be fair to them nor in their best interest. Why don't you "walk a mile in their shoes"? See how they live in their home with their family. The people who live at Murray Center are not animals that you can just group together into "like-kinds" and shove them into a CILA together. I have worked for a community provider before and I can tell you one thing for certain, the people who live at Murray would never receive the quality of care that they get now from residing in a CILA.

Please do what is right, keep Murray Center open.

Sincerely,
Tracey Starr

3/31/12

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

To Whom It May Concern;

My name is Donna Perchez and I am opposed to the closing of Murray Developmental Center, in Centralia, IL. I have been truly blessed to work at Murray Center for 33 years as an Educator/Q.S.P.

Many of the individuals I work with at Murray's Center are the most vulnerable of all people. Not only are the individuals developmentally disabled but also have multiple sensory disabilities (visual, hearing impaired, etc.) and are burdened with multiple physical ailments such as cardiac, pulmonary, gastrointestinal and neurological disorders.

Some may say that our individuals would best be served in a private facility, be it a CILA, Group Home, or Skilled Nursing Facility. Through the years I have seen many who would disagree. I work with one individual, Steven, whose mother has told me many times about when he was living in a Group Home and fell through the shower chair. I don't believe Rita's family would agree after she was over-medicated and came to Murray's Center nearly comatose. Over time her medications were reduced and she began walking again on her own. One of the individuals with whom I work, Phil, lived for many years in a private facility with a communication device that only said, "yes" and "no." Phil watches and understands the news, thinks in the abstract and can spell. He has a communication device that can help him to communicate thousands of words and phrases. Those who say that an "institution" is no place for an individual to live, have not talked to the families of Gene, Derise, Sam, Jimmy, Lyndall, George, Robert, or Donna. These individuals lived in an "institution," Murray Center, for many years. For one reason or another they were determined to be more appropriately placed in a privately owned facility. Many, in fact, survived outside of Murray Center for less than one year.

It is difficult for most people to make major life changes. Imagine making those changes while dealing with comprehension and communication issues, comfort issues and developmental disabilities. Imagine the added difficulties of major medical complications. Imagine you too were in a state operated "institution" that was closing. This is the home they have known most of their lives.

In 2001, Lincoln, another SODC closed. Individuals came to Murray Center on buses and vans, in groups and as individuals. I received three individuals from Lincoln and we did our best to make them welcome, and to meet their needs: physically, and emotionally. Cheryl died within a year and a half. We lost JoAnn in 2006, and finally Gary died in 2007. All of the people I received had passed within six years.

I recently read a book about World War II and it described how Hitler had transferred the developmentally disabled out of an institution by train, supposedly to relocate them to another facility. They never reached the other facility but were targeted for extermination.

When closing their home and uprooting them on buses and vans, in groups and as individuals, many may not survive the added stress. The parallels are chilling. We are taught the least among us is the greatest and we are to welcome and protect the weak.

It is with these concerns in mind that I respectfully ask Governor Patrick Quinn and those on the GOCFA Committee to reconsider the closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL.

Sincerely,
Donna Perchez

I went to Murray Center for a visit today, it had been way too long! I did get to enjoy visiting with Janie & her mother in the dinning room as we put together a puzzle! Oh, & Janie's mom took my picture w/Janie! I also visited w/old co-workers & met some new. Hard to believe that at the end of May it will be 6 years since I left Murray to become an "OLD MARRIED WOMAN!" But I was still greeted by name, with smiles and hugs! I had NOT been forgotten by my Murray Family! I was even greeted by some new faces with; "Hi my name is... What is yours!" I had a great time on Apple Cottage today & I need to visit much more often, that is if QUINN WILL ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN! WHAT I AM SAYING SHOULD MATTER TO SOMEONE OUT THERE!!! THESE PEOPLE ARE FAMILY! IT'S CALLED "THE MURRAY FAMILY" FOR SOME OF THEM IT'S THE ONLY FAMILY THEY HAVE EVER KNOWN! HOW WOULD YOU FEEL MR. QUINN IF SOME STRANGER WALKED INTO YOUR HOME & SAID; "GUESS WHAT? I DON'T LIKE THIS PLACE, BOARD IT UP, PUT HIM & THE REST OF THEM WHERE EVER IT DOESN'T MATTER! JUST MAKE SURE IT'S CHEAP & I DON'T HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT ANYMORE." HOW'S THAT SOUND TO YOU MR. QUINN??? YOU FIRST IN LINE FOR THAT TO HAPPEN TO YOU & YOUR'S?

Jenalee Crane-Trumbo
519 Kristy Drive
Centralia, IL 62801

To Whom it May Concern:

I am concerned that closing Murray Center is not a wise decision. Murray Center provides excellent care to approximately 280 special need residents who cannot care for themselves. They suffer from PICA, brittle bone syndrome, and aggressive behaviors. Some individuals with progressive deterioration can't move themselves and must be repositioned every two hours to prevent bedsores. The 550 staff at Murray Center provides care other facilities can't. Many of Murray's patients come from other

institutions that can't handle them or care for them properly. Some live well past their projected life span due to Murray's care.

Governor Quinn's plan to cancel Murray's essential services and place the residents in (CILLA) smaller facilities won't work. These smaller facilities do not have the staff necessary to care for the kind of patient that Murray Center is caring for. Closing Murray Center will bring extreme hardship to residents and their families besides the many people employed by Murray Center.

Please reconsider.

Rev. Lisa Hart

St. Peter United Church of Christ

Centralia, IL

April 2012

To All Concerned Parties:

This letter is written in support of the residents of Murray Center located in Centralia, IL in response to budget cuts that call for closing this facility in 2013.

The residents housed at the facility have been there for several years. Many could not be successfully relocated to community homes or wherever else the plan may be for them to reside. Many would not even be able to tolerate such a move! The level of care provided to them currently must be continued.

Not only is this proposed move devastating to the residents of Murray Center and their families, it is devastating for the employees! Our region is already economically depressed with record high unemployment. The closure of this facility would have severe economic consequences for the employees and the surrounding communities. Centralia simply could not recover from the closure of this facility.

Our community is pleading for this facility and others like it to be spared from the Governor's planned budget cuts.

Please reconsider the planned closing of Murray Center AND the Animal Disease Lab for the sake of all parties involved.

Sincerely,

Pam Prather

Centralia, IL

To Members of the CoGFA:

I wish to register my opposition to the proposed closure of Murray Center.

My name is Sharon Heitkamp. I retired from Murray Center after having worked there in the Physical therapy department for most of my adult life. During my years at Murray, I provided therapeutic treatment for many of the individuals who needed PT services. I got to know people from each building. I know first hand how little some of these people are able to do for themselves. They rely completely and totally upon their caregivers for positioning/repositioning, eating, drinking, bathing, dressing, toileting, taking medication, transportation and mobility.

It must be pretty scary to people who are so dependent upon others when they are met with new caretakers. One thing about Murray Center that's important is the consistency of the staff. The staff turnover rate has always been very low, as evidenced by employees who have been there for 5, 10, 15, 20, 30, 40+ years. This is beneficial to the people who live in Murray because they can be assured that even on days when there are different staff (faces and voices that are not familiar), they will still be able to rely on some familiar faces and voices to be available somewhere in their daily routine. This is true on any given day on any given shift. That's bound to be comforting to them. It would be to me. Personally, I am a social person and I don't think I would like to be in a home where I have only 1 staff person to rely on for assistance. What if that person didn't like me? What if they didn't take good care of me and I couldn't do anything about it or even report it to anyone because I couldn't talk? That's scary.

Staff consistency ensures continuity of care. And I'm sure it's important to the residents to know that there will be consistency and routine within their home environment. Anything that contributes to relaxation for those persons who have mis-shapen, spastic, and contorted bodies is very important. Anything unusual that startles or causes some of these people to be fearful, anxious, worried, nervous, afraid, or upset can contribute to changes in their health. It must be pretty frightening to be so dependent upon others and then have to face the possibility of being evicted from your home and separated from your friends and caretakers.

I think it's a shame it's come to this. Community placement is probably good for some people, but for others it's surely going to be torturous. I don't think "one size fits all", and I think it's important that there still be reasonable choices for disabled people. If they and their guardians don't want to live in the community and subject themselves to the risks there, then there still needs to be an option to live in an SODC. Murray Center provides quality services for the people who live there – some of whom have made Murray their home for many years. Please don't close Murray. Please allow those people who

choose to make Murray their home to stay in their home. Don't take away their choice and don't evict them from their home.

Thank you.

Sharon Heitkamp

My name is Richard Chadeayne. I live in Millstadt, Illinois about 100 miles south of Springfield, Illinois. My daughter, Suzie has been a resident since 1977 at the Warren G. Murray Development Center in Centralia Illinois which is approximately fifty miles from Millstadt. When she was sixteen years old she was in a serious car accident and suffered severe permanent brain damage. The care she has received at Murray has been incredible. The staff has cared and treated her as if she was their own child or sibling. I am seventy four years old and have missed very few weeks going to visit her. When I leave there I am at peace and assured that she will be well taken care until I see her the next week. I've talked to many medical personnel and other families and they as confident as I am that Suzie and the other residents would not have the degree of care they have now at a group home that Governor Quinn is proposing they be sent to by closing Murray Center.

She is totally dependent on others for her care. She cannot walk or talk and must be tube fed and diapered. She is completely unable to communicate with anyone. She can sit in a chair and I am sure she knows who I am because of the grin she always has for me. She is depending on me and the wonderful staff at Murray Center.

Richard Chadeayne

To Whom it May Concern:

As I am sure you are aware, Governor Quinn has recently proposed the closer of several state facilities, including the Murray Center, home for approximately 280 residents and jobs for nearly 500 people. This is a serious issue, and my grandparents continue to be heartbroken, worried and everyday I see and hear her heartfelt pleas as her fears mount. She has made several attempts to contact various local politicians, raise awareness, including a rally that drew hundreds.

The proposed closure of Murray Center is continuously growing in support. Local businesses and numerous other local politicians have begun to express their support of keeping the Murray Center open. Closing the Murray Center not only has drastic effect on my family and others, but proves detrimental to an already struggling Illinois and Centralia economy. Pulling the funding of Murray Center, in turn has drastic effects on arguably almost every industry in Centralia, including the hotel, retail and restaurant industries. Understandably, the State of Illinois is in poor fiscal status; however, Gov. Quinn and his Chicago associates don't understand the real outcome of closing Murray. I am a first-time voter in the upcoming elections, as are many of my friends and classmates at Millikin. The Murray Center group of supporting politicians has the most significant role of the politicians I aim to support

come election time. I am a political science minor, with current classes concerning American politics. I also have some interest in politics in the future, so closing state facilities as a negative budget continues to mount, is understandable. However, like I have addressed previously, I do not understand the closure of the Murray Center because the outcome that will result in significant money lost in Centralia economy, hundreds of jobs lost and lets not forget the residents of Murray Center, the under-represented challenged residents, who often cannot speak for themselves.

"Save the Murray Center" is not a small rally, hundreds, if not thousands, have begun to sign petitions and even local businesses in Centralia, Springfield and Taylorville have begun to voice their support. Lets not evict these residents from their home, one that many of them have always known as that. We have the choice of where we'd like to live, why can't these people have their choice too! It's time to say no to Governor Quinn.

Nicholas Zepin
Taylorville, IL 62568

Written Statement

Submitted on behalf of, and with consent of a Murray Center Resident-
AGAINST CLOSURE of Warren G Murray Center

My name is KATHRYN. I am 24 years old. I came to live at the WARREN G. MURRAY DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER in Centralia five years ago. This DHS State Operated Facility saved my life! I used to hurt myself so much that I had to wear a helmet, shoulder pads and knee pads all day to keep me safe from self injury. In the year before coming to Murray Center, I was in seven different treatment facilities and hospitals within Illinois, Missouri and Ohio. No one could help me!

My family and I were in crisis when Murray Center came to our rescue. They have trained and specialized staff that can help me with my behavioral needs and I make progress daily. I no longer have to wear the protective equipment. I now work at the Centralia Community Workshop and earn a paycheck. The best part though, are my monthly home visits to see my family.

Even though my mental capabilities are impaired, my future is full of hope. But for now, Murray Center is the only home for me, based upon my needs. Please don't close my home!

Sincerely,
Kathryn Groner
Murray Center Resident
March 28, 2012

Parent:
Judy Groner
531 East Gorman Street
Nashville, IL 62263

Dear COGFA Members

I am writing to oppose the closing of the Murray Center, in Centralia, IL. My son, Sam, age 22, has lived at Murray Center since 2004. If he was able to live in a less restrictive setting, he would already be doing so. He is at times physically aggressive and can hurt himself or others. He requires consistent staff and structure. The staff at Murray Center are trained to manage maladaptive behaviors. He has friendships with his peers and staff. I bring Sam home 1-2 times a week for a short visit. He saw the Save Murray Center sign that I have in my front yard. He asked me if I was selling our house. I didn't have the heart to tell him, that they were trying to close his home. This would be devastating to him. When Sam was admitted to Murray, I moved to Centralia, bought a home, and was fortunate to get a job at Murray Center. I know the care the people who live here receive. I could not work there or sleep at night, if I had any doubts about his care. I have also worked in a CILA, where on many occasions, I was the only staff person to cook, bath, toilet, do laundry, pass medications, and clean. It was not a safe environment, when there was a behavioral or medical issue. This is not the kind of home, that my son could live in, nor would I want him too. There is no, or very little supervision of staff, and very high turnover of staff. Sam requires a safe, consistent, home. He lives on a unit with about 14 other individuals. He has a certain number of staff that interacts with him daily. My son is comfortable at Murray Center and this is his home. Please do not disrupt his life or his home.

Thank You,

Barbara Conyers
4 Redwood Dr.
Centralia IL
62801

Dave Mulvin Painting Contractor, Inc.

P.O. Box 1141 Centralia, IL 62801-9117

618-532-3222-work 618-532-4624-fax

April 3, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Attn: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

Commissioners:

RE: Murray Center/Centralia, IL

My name is David Mulvin, and I have lived in Centralia for over 50 years. My family moved here because of Murray Center, my father was the supervisor for the painting contractor who painted the

facility when it was built. Our family fell in love with the town and as a result I have been a business person since 1979.

In my capacity as a painting contractor I have worked at Murray Center and many other businesses in this area. The closing of Murray Center would have an enormous negative economic impact on our community. This area has steadily lost jobs over the past fifteen years and we cannot afford to lose another employer.

Our unemployment rate in this area is one of the highest in the state and the closing of this facility would raise it even more. As a result of the high unemployment in our area many families are moving out of the area. We have seen a steady decline in our city's population over the past ten years. With a decrease in population comes an increase in property taxes and a domino effect is put into place.

As a community, we simply cannot sustain another closure of this magnitude in our area. We are already a depressed area and this economic blow is going to be difficult and impossible to absorb.

I would like to opportunity to speak with your Commission and could meet at your convenience. Giving this community a chance at survival is of the utmost importance.

Sincerely,
David Mulvín

April 5, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: Opponent to closing Murray Center

Testimony: Would like opportunity to give oral testimony at hearing on April 20, 2012.

My wife and I are parents and legal co-guardians of a disabled son, Ronald, who is a resident of Murray Center in Centralia, and has been for almost 30 years. His primary diagnosis is Trisomy 12p, which is a rare chromosome disorder. We feel Ronald has been receiving the best possible care for his situation and certainly wish to continue with his care at Murray Center. Our son will be 41 years old this May, and has a mental age of less than 2 years of age. He is non-verbal, has no awareness of danger, and needs help with things that you and I take for granted such as feeding ourselves, dressing ourselves, taking medications, etc. He is ambulatory and almost 6' tall. It took us and the staff at Murray Center 19 years

for him to be toilet trained although he still has an occasional accident. My point is that we and the staff have not given up on Ronald, and do not intend to give up on his making progress and having a stable living situation. Having to close Murray Center would greatly disrupt his life and I'm sure would set him back tremendously in what he has gained over the years.

My wife and I have looked into several community group housing situations and have found none to meet his needs. Murray Center is his home and he is happy there. The staff and workers at Murray Center do a tremendous job meeting his needs with his very limited ability. I would ask that you have enough heart to keep Murray Center open for our son and the 275 other people with similar or worse situations than our son. Individuals at Murray Center have tried community placements only to find they could not succeed and were brought back to Murray Center in worse condition than they left. The community facilities are good for those individuals who can function well in them but the State of Illinois needs a full continuum of services to meet the needs of those who still need the additional care provided in Murray Center.

We are asking you to find it within the means of the Great State of Illinois to reject the closing and to fund Murray Center and keep it open for people such as our son.

Sincerely,
Robert Birge

I am writing to voice my opposition to Governor Quinn's proposal to close W.G. Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. I have worked at Murray Center for over 33 years. Most of my family has worked at Murray Center. Murray has been a big part of my life and this community. Murray is a very caring place, it is my second home & family. It has always been a great place to make a living for my family. I have worked in direct care, management and currently as a RN. I work with the most physical, developmental and medically challenged individuals. I know the individuals, I can tell you about them, many times before their vital signs will tell me something is wrong. I know their behaviors and individual personalities. I pass this knowledge on to new staff. A stranger or new care facility cannot provide for the individuals as we do at Murray! Closure of Murray would be a death sentence for many of our individuals! I want the best for our individuals that live at Murray. I know that the quality of care for our individuals cannot be provided anywhere else. The parents of the individuals want the best for their loved ones and they agree that Murray provides the best possible care. This community thrives on and around Murray Center. The individuals as well as employees at Murray spend their money at local stores and restaurants. I do not see anything beneficial to anyone affected by the closure of Murray Center all I see is devastation and death. Murray is the only home many of the individuals have ever known and speaking as their advocate and on my behalf ... KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN!!

Sincerely Yours,
Michele McMillan
308 N. High St.

Committee Members

Closure of the Murray Center has tremendous negative impact on the community here in Southern Illinois. These employees have no other jobs available in the area, where unemployment is now well above the state average. Close facilities or cut costs in the Chicago area where the impact is negligible or cut costs in other ways. This closure will be a wash when the loss of tax income is figured in.

Wesley Breeze
1150 Byars Rd
Centralia, IL 62801

My name is Thomacine Haywood and I am the legal guardian and sister of Belinda Haley, a resident of Murray Center, Centralia, IL. I am vehemently opposed to the closure of the center on behalf of my sister who is unable to voice her own plea. And this is why. Feel free to read or use this statement in any way that is appropriate.

You see, Belinda's parents are deceased. She has been a resident of the center since she was a small child and she is now nearly 50 years old. It has been her home and the people who work there her family for more than 40 years. Our family entrusted the center with her care when her myriad of health problems and her inability to walk, sit up, feed herself and communicate made it impossible to care for her in our home.

She has cerebral palsy, is profoundly retarded, has epilepsy and a swallowing disorder which makes it necessary to feed her through a feeding tube. She cannot communicate her outrage personally because she can only communicate with the use of a manual communication board. That she can communicate to us at all has been through the care of the center where physical and occupational therapists have provided Belinda with a way to communicate to the world.

To release the residents of Murray Center into the community is an atrocity of the highest proportions. The true test of the integrity of a country or state is in how its leaders care for its residents that are least

capable of caring for themselves. Show the integrity of the leaders of the fine state of Illinois and advocate for the residents of Murray Center to stay in their homes at Murray Center.

Thomacine Haywood, N.C.R., L.M.T., U.R.M.

Thomacine Haywood Reflexology CEO

I have worked at the Murray Center for almost two years now. Before I worked at the Murray center I worked at a community based facility. I would like to say the care, compassion, and the hard work people who work for Murray put into helping the human beings that live there is the best I have seen. They want to help the human beings who live their to get out in the community. I have seen other facilities want to do more, but were unable to because a lack of staff. The community based facilities are for profit which means the staff is not paid well. Your average Fast Food worker makes more then a person who cares for people who developmentally delayed. If you want insurance you are going to pay at least 50% of your paycheck. People leave quickly because you can not support a family or one person on what private facilities pay. It is hard work to give care to human beings that can not do their basic daily care on their own. I love the work that is why I decided t go to Murray Center and test. At Murray Center I could do the work that I love and support myself and my family. I feel like I am honestly helping the people I care for. They are able to take a human being who has behaviors that are so severe their own families have had to ask for help or other facilities could not care for and eventually take them into the community.

One human being came to Murray about the same time I did he came from another facility that was shut down for bad practice. He was fed with a feeding tube. He could not walk or toilet himself. He looked like he weighed maybe 90 pounds and that would be with his shoes on. He did not go to a work shop. He basically just got moved from the couch back to his wheelchair through out the day. Then within months staff notice that he was getting stronger with permission and help from the PT they would help him walk and he started gaining muscle. What seemed like a short time he was walking on his own. They started to train him to eat. Before you knew it he was running down the hall and to greet you in the morning. He was going to the dinning room to eat. He went from the medical cottage to a cottage that has higher functioning human beings. He now goes to a on grounds day program and he smiles a lot. I don't know another facility that would have done that for him in a year and a half.

I have seen others who have come a long way sense they have lived at Murray Center. I have seen staff come in on their days off to go medical appointments because people they care for asked for them to go. I have seen people who we care for cry when staff has died. I have seen staff pull money out of their pockets to make sure the people on their unit had art supplies. I have seen people take up donations to make sure that a cottage that was not in use any more got turned into an activity center so the human beings there had another place to go and have fun and gain social skills so they could go into the community.

The thing that impresses me the most about the people who live there is no matter where they go for the day. They are always ready to come home to the Murray Center and tell staff what they did or what they accomplished that day. We all sit together on furniture and talk. I love working for the Murray Center I am proud of how much my co-workers and the professionals care about our people. I am proud of our people and how much they learn everyday. I think shutting us down would be a huge mistake for the human beings that live there because it is there home and the people who work there care about them deeply. You need to come visit and see for yourselves. Murray Center is their home were they feel safe and well cared for.

Susan Kemmerling
Mental Health Tech 1

Dear CGFA Committee Members,

I am writing this letter as an Opponent to the Governor's recommendation to close Murray Developmental Center. I have been employed at Murray Development Center for the past 13 years as an Information Services Specialist. Prior to coming to Murray Center, I was employed for 21 years for a Sheltered Workshop where I helped develop and managed the Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILA) program. While I am a proponent for transitioning individuals into the community when there are appropriate services, which can meet the needs of those individuals, I must explicitly state that appropriate services are NOT available nor can be provided within the time frames established. I must also explicitly state that CILAs are not provided with adequate funding nor were designed to provide the level of care that the majority of individuals that reside at Murray Center require. As many individuals have already pointed out, Murray Center has focused on transitioning individuals to community based residential services however many are found ineligible due to their severe levels of need. The CILA cannot meet their needs thus admissions are denied. Many of those who have been placed in a CILA setting have returned to Murray Center due to their inability to adjust to a less structured environment with minimal supervision. One Size Fits All does not apply when dealing with people.

As a previous Associate Director of a CILA program, there were times that we needed to use the services of a State Operated DD Center like Murray Center to help provide behavioral, medical, pharmacological, etc. services to assist an individual during a relapse. With the closures of centers like Murray Developmental Center, where are CILA providers going to get assistance when they have individuals who relapse and need intense interventions that CILAs cannot provide and are not available elsewhere in the community? Murray Center provided technical support in many areas when it wasn't available to community providers. There is a need, a great need for the services that Murray Center provides and those needs are being ignored in the name of "community integration". Closing Murray Center will

place over 270 individuals in settings that are not truly appropriate or in their best interests and will not only place them at risk of injury but will also place staff at risk as well.

I fail to see where closing Murray Center, the third largest employer, will save the State money as it will just transition money from one budget line to another. Two Hundred and seventy plus individuals will still need residential services. The loss of over 500 jobs in south central Illinois will have a devastating effect in Centralia and surrounding communities. Taxpaying individuals will go on unemployment rolls and eventually welfare roles. Businesses will close and tax revenues will diminish.

Please carefully examine what you are truly accomplishing in the name of "community integration" before you tragically upset the lives of over 270 individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, over 500 taxpaying employees and their surrounding communities. Please oppose Governor Quinn's recommendation to close Murray Developmental Center.

Respectfully,

Vickie Miller

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

My name is Judith C. Kempf, I am the mother of Jeffrey Lee Sanders who is a 49 year old resident of W. G. Murray Center, Centralia, IL.

Jeffrey has lived at Murray Center since he was 7 years old. He is a Severley Retarded. He is a Legally DEAF person. with cerebral palsy. of his whole right side; He is a Hepatitis - B carrier. He has Epilepsy. that causes him to have sieziures.....and even more disabilities

As his Mother / Guardian i am a OPPONENT of the closing of his home.....Jeffrey is so disabled that he can't just live any where . He is getting more and more disabled as he ages. He now has osteopenia which cause him to fall.....His cognitive development assessment places him in the profound range of mental retardation

I appreciate your taking the time to read this email and i hope and pray that you will reconsider the gov. wanting to close my sons home.

Thank you Very much
Judith C. Kempf,
Mother/guardia of Jeffrey Lee Sanders resident of
Murray Center.

I have worked for Murray Developmental Center for 29 years in the Buiness Office. Although, I am not direct care I have had numerous dealings with parents/guardians of the individuals we serve. They have all told me the same thing over the 29 years I have serve as the Trust Fund Administrator for their child. Thank you all for providing such wonderful care to my child. With tears in my eyes and my voice crackling I reply. You're very welcome and thank you. I always tell them Murray Center is a wonderful place and I also have a sister that is very much like your child. Right now my sister is able to stay at home, but she is changing and we know she will not be able to stay at home in the near future. We have looked into other options, but there's no other options. Murray Center is the right place for her and the only place I trust. Closing Murray Center is not the answer. Group homes and Nursing homes is not the answer. A lot of the children from Murray Center will not make it in Group Homes or Nursing Homes. I have seen so many leave Murray Center and go out into the community to only come back to Murray Center, because the community can not take care of them. These children will not make it without Murray Center 24 hour care. Governor Quinn, please have a heart. If this was your child what would you do? What would Jesus do? You will not be able to balance the budget by closing Murray Center and the Animal lab. What you will do is make Centralia, IL a ghost town.

Thank you!

Thelma Wooters

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL. 62706

The news of the closing or the possible closing of Murray has not been well accepted. Murray Center has been an exceedingly flourishing residence, where my brother (William "Billy" Rohr) has lived for the past 40 years.

From the time you enter the entrance until the time you leave; you will always feel a strong sense of pride in regards to the grounds, landscaping and physical structures but also (most importantly) to the people and staff that call Murray Center their work home.

Billy has received the best of care since Billy needs 24 hour care. Billy is profoundly disabled since birth and needs constant care for ALL his needs. When I visit Billy, I get a tremendous amount of relief that he needs are exceeding met. When I sit in Billy's annual meeting, I am very impressed with all the staff that in some shape or form touch Billy's life at Murray Center.

This center must not close...in fact this home for many residence should be the center piece for excellence in our state.

I will work along with other family members, staff and public servants to keep and maintain this facility open.

Best Regards

Wayne Rohr

To the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed closure of the Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia Illinois.

I am a family member of a current client of the facility and I am very upset that she may lose her home away from home. My niece has found a placement that mets her needs and provides what she needs at the Murray Center. As basic as this sounds, it was not a simple process.

After leaving the public school setting, it was a very big job for my sister to find a place for her daughter to live. It was simply not possible for my disabled niece to remain in her family home.

Parents of disabled children and adults face a tremendous challenge as they try to find a perfect placement for them. IT ISN'T EASY! The Warren G. Murray Center is home to so many people with needs. If there were other successful options, they would have been tried and taken advantage of already. The Murray Center PROVIDES for this NEED!!! It is a shame that innocent people, who can't care for themselves properly and depend on varying degrees of help just to live like a human being, are being targeted to lose their home and the care that CAN'T be successfully given in other situations.

The clients and their families are at risk if this threatened closure is carried out. These clients and their families deserve the same basic care and consideration as any other people do.

I plead that our voices be heard, that the facility be looked at as not just a 'building with expensive overhead costs' but as a HOME for disabled adults who have no other acceptable options! Most of us can't really imagine that, but go to the Murray Center and witness the residents. You will leave counting your blessings for the life you have. Talk to the parents and families of the residents and find out the struggles they have had. Then imagine all these innocents being denied the simple comforts of the life

that has become their's! The options proposed for these needy adults are not appropriate or else they'd already be in place.

The Warren G. Murray Center provides for so many disabled people, people who desperately need it! Many of these needy adults can't even begin to express this need, so we who care for them have to do it for them. We beg you to listen to the voices of those who know them, those who love them and those who have tried all the other options.

Find a way to keep the Warren G. Murray Center open and functioning as it currently is. It is a facility that is needed and can't be replaced.

May God bless all that make decisions that affect so many others.

Thank you,
Sincerely,
Janet Wolf

I am an opponent of keeping Murray Center open. My name is James Akers and I would like this to be submitted as written testimony. My Daughter has lived at Murray Center now for years. She is safe and well taken care of there. All you people in Springfield want to do is disrupt and change the lives of the people that need the stability the most, the individuals at Murray Center. Last year Murray Center made the State of Illinois money and yet you still want to close it. Why don't all of the politicians in Springfield just move to Chicago thats all you care about anyway, been that way for years. Live in Chicage and we will take care of you, live in downstate Illinois and you can go to hell. You people ought to be ashamed of yourself's. How do you honestly sleep at night. Warren Murray is a wonderful facility and the people that work there do a wonderful job. What about them, there jobs, their families, their homes. You just don't care do you. Why don't you all go after the people that have been on welfare and food stamps for years and don't even care if they get a job or not. Anytime there is a cut to be made it is always Medicare, Social Security, and the Disabled that are the targets. So you see it is always the same. I will be so happy when your all voted out of office.

Thank you

James Akers

Hi, my name is Kayla Ryan. I am a 23 year old mother of two beautiful boys and my family is what i live for. I am an employee at murray center and I am saddened by the news of my family getting torn apart. And yes i am talking about MY family. My murray family.

We support and stand by residents everyday 24/7. We help them with not only everyday skills such as eating and bathing but we give them 2 things that every human being needs to survive. Stability and love. To some of them we are all they have or have ever known. We are all a family and they love us just as much as we love them. You have individuals who are not blood related to one another but have bunked side by side for over 25 years. You have workers who have cared for the same individuals for 30 years. How would separating them be effective? They take pride in their home and it may not seem like a lot to some but its all they have and we need to fight for their home. Some of our residents are so distraught by the news, crying and asking why. These human beings are not criminals and they should have rights. The governors decision would not only destroy a beautiful family but it would also leave my hometown in ruins and send myself and 549 other loyal, hardworking, dedicated employees to the unemployment line. Why destroy families and towns because our governor is to lazy to find logic ways to cut the budget. Our state is just going to go down from here if he continues to ruin livelihoods all over. It is sickening and we need your help. Please be their voice. Please be our voice. Save their home. Save my town.

Kayla Ryan

Dear COGFA members,

I am writing this letter in opposition to the closure of Murray Center in Centralia. I am the sister of a resident who lives at Murray Center. My little brother Sam is 22 years old and requires consistent care and supervision that he is currently provided with at Murray. He is capable of having behavioral outbursts that require multiple staff to keep him and other residents safe. I am a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and have worked in smaller group CILA (Community Integrated Living Arrangement) homes in the past. If my brother was capable of living in a smaller group home then that is something my family would have pursued. Because of Sammy's behaviors it is clear to me that he would be a danger to himself, the staff, and other residents in a CILA setting. If he were to have a behavioral problem when there was only one or two staff on duty, which is a typical amount of staff for an 8 bed CILA home, they would not have the capability to keep him safe. At Murray Center when there is a behavioral problem there are many staff who are able to come and assist as well as enough staff to stay and supervise the other residents. I fear that in a group home he may seriously injure himself or others and may end up in jail. My little brother deserves better treatment than that and he is currently well adjusted and happy at Murray. He has lasting relationships with staff and other residents who are his friends that he sees on a regular basis. Many of the staff members that work with my brother have remained the same since he went to live there in 2004 and they have formed long term relationships

with Sam. The staff at Murray understands his individual needs, they are familiar with his behavior, and know how to interact with him.

My brother is frequently provided with opportunities to go into the community and participate in recreation activities and community events. He is not secluded and I do not view Murray as an “institution”. I would say that he is as much a part of the community at Murray Center as he would be in a CILA group home. He lives on a cottage with 14 residents on a nice campus. He has a place on campus where he can go and work everyday. In the community I fear there would be no where he could safely go work and he would remain at the home all day. There is an inground pool on the Murray grounds where he can swim in the summertime. He would never be able to go to a community pool due to his poor interpretation of social cues. There is a garden he can help grow and a large gymnasium where he can play basketball. Murray also provides a house on the edge of the campus that my family has utilized to visit with him when we were not able to bring him to my mother’s home. It provides a home like setting for families while providing the safety of staff close by. There are a team of health professionals at Murray that supervise his care. I have seen how some CILA homes operate and the supervision is often inadequate and staff turnover rates are high. While I know some CILA homes are well supervised I am aware of some that are not. I feel that as families we have the right to choose what setting is appropriate for our loved ones. While CILA’s are a wonderful option for some individuals they are not suitable for all individuals such as those with behavioral and complicated medical issues. I do not feel that you should take away our right to choose what environment is best for our loved one.

My mother sold our childhood home in Carterville and moved to Centralia in order to be near her son. She is able to bring him to her home a couple times a week and occasionally keeps him for an overnight visit on the weekends. She was fortunate enough to get a job at Murray Center. If Murray Center were to close I feel that my family and the families of many others would seriously suffer. Please do not vote to close Murray Center. It is the best place for my little brother.

Sincerely,
Jessica Conyers, CTRS

It is very important that COGFA hear many individuals and organizations speak up in the support of closure of Murray DC as part of the State's plan to rebalance the system towards increased community-based services for people with disabilities. Unfortunately many families do not have a comprehensive view of what type of community living is available and default to institutional care instead of support of independence by community based services. We, as service providers and people who have disabilities, want these families to realize a quality of life they may never thought possible for their family member with a disability. Community services are cost effective and promote dignity and self reliance at the level the person with the disability is able to enjoy. The State of Illinois needs to move ahead and make community living a reality for people who have previously known only institutional living.

Nancy McClellan-Hickey
Executive Director
PACE, Inc.

My name is Patricia Dickens, I work at Warren G. Murray Center in Centralia Illinois. I am worried about the possible closure of this facility. The level of care these people receive at Murray Center is not available in the community, and their parents should have the right to choose where they live and receive services. Unemployment rate is already high in our area and 550 more people without jobs will only add to that, not to mention the trickle down effect it will cause our businesses and the surrounding communities. I feel you people have not thought this out enough to justify closing our facility or any other facility like ours.

Thank you.

Patricia Dickens

If the state can ensure that residents there have a 'suitable place' to go if the facility is closed, we are highly in favor of it closing, not for the possible cost savings, but for increasing the freedom and quality of life of the residents there.

Paul & Verlyn Rosenberger
356 E Holiday Drive
Decatur, IL 62526-2338

My name is Patricia Dickens, I am a cook at Murray Center and am very concerned about the possible closure of our facility. The residents of Murray Center are a part of our community and should have a right as to where they are to receive services, if not them, then their families should have the right to say where they live. To many of these people this is the only home they have ever known and do not want to leave or be moved to someplace that is not familiar to them. They will not receive the same care in the community due to lack of available services. Who is going to want to open up services for these people when the state doesn't pay them? What happens when someone cannot live in that setting? Where do they go then?

Unemployment rate is already very high in our area, 550 Murray employees without jobs will only add to that. Not to mention the trickle down effect this will cause the surrounding areas as well as Centralia.

Do they even have the community based homes in this area to provide homes to Murray Center residents? I hope that whoever decides the future of our Center thinks of all aspects of this move and what it would do to our residents and there families before they make any harsh decisions.

Taking these people out of their home would be like someone coming to your house and taking your child away from their family. What would you do if this involved your family?

Thank you
Patricia Dickens

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

I have been a loyal employee at Murray Center for more than 36 years, and I am writing to oppose the closure of Murray Developmental Center.

First, I will tell you that residents who live at Murray Center are the most important factor to take into consideration. They are an integrated part of our community. The level of care that is required for our residents is not available at other facilities in this area. They are both medically challenged and behaviorally challenged, making them unlikely for placement elsewhere. This complicated group of residents requires high staff ratios, which I understand is not available at CILA and group homes. I also understand that over the past years, residents have been placed into these types of homes, however, have returned to Murray Center. This is home to them, and where staff members are capable of managing their behaviors and medical problems. This type of transition can be very detrimental to the lives of our residents. There is a medical staff available to residents at our facility, which is essential. These individuals, along with their families, should have the right to choose where they reside and receive services. These factors lumped together lower the chance of survival in group homes. A small percentage of residents at Murray Center are capable of placement in a community setting, however, this requires a team approach only when the individual is ready for this type of placement. Murray Center has already implemented a team approach to appropriately and effectively care for their own.

The type of population at Murray Center does not adapt well to change. This is due to their diagnosis of mental retardation, including 10% of the population with autism. Even small changes create huge opposition for these folks, setting of unwarranted behaviors, weight gain or loss, illness, and many other issues. Over half of Murray Center's population has called this facility home for more than 20 years. Close to 70 residents have been at home here for more than 40 years. Can you live with taking them away from their home?

I would also like for you to understand what type of impact that this type of closure would have on our local economy. It would be an extreme upset, as Murray Center is the third largest employer in this already depressed area. This center's closure would force the unemployment in the area to an even higher extreme. The effects of this closure would reach to great proportion affecting businesses, schools, churches, hospitals, along with many more services in our area. This closure would most likely cause many other businesses to close.

There is also a question as to whether or not there are facilities with open beds in the current CILA or group homes in the area. Will drugs, psychiatric units, or jails become the treatment for these individuals? I feel that this is not an appropriate solution when we can care for these residents competently in one state facility. Do you have a plan? Have you thought of how you will appropriately and effectively care for the lives of these people? What about their safety? They were born at a disadvantage, and we are their advocates. Many cannot speak for themselves. What if this were your child? Others should not suffer due to economic mismanagement.

Please take all of these factors into consideration before making your decision.

Sincerely,

Cindy Weatherford
22531 North Miller Lake Lane
Texico, IL 62889

April 10, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
Attn: Warren G. Murray Developmental Center Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in support of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL.

I have worked at Murray Developmental Center as an Occupational Therapist for over 11 years. My responsibilities include evaluations of the individuals for adaptive feeding equipment, swallowing evaluations for appropriate diet consistencies, wheelchair positioning and modifications, upper extremity range of motion programs, upper extremity splinting programs, behavior programs, sensory integration activities and providing adaptive equipment/adaptive environments.

I have been a resident of Centralia, IL my entire life. Before I was employed at Murray Center, I was very familiar with the individuals who live here through associations. They are very active in the community through churches, sporting events, shopping areas and local functions. Centralia is their home and they are welcomed and respected as part of the community. Governor Quinn wants the individuals to be active participants of a local community. This goal is already being met through the various activities they regularly participate in the Centralia area, as well as outings to the St. Louis areas for ball games, shows, shopping, etc. I didn't have to be an employee of Murray Center to understand the services provided for the individuals who live here. Their presence is well known throughout the community.

Murray Center is fortunate to have both an Occupational Therapist and a Physical Therapist on staff full time. I am a Clinical Supervisor to six colleges who send me Level I and II students for their fieldwork experience. These students always compliment Murray Center for the experiences they receive that no other settings provide for them. Occupational Therapy services at Murray Center are so broad, as mentioned above, that the students feel very fortunate to experience all of these various OT services in one setting. For example, they are given the opportunity to participate in building a wheelchair from a basic frame to a specially molded seat and back to provide good overall, upright position for our individuals who cannot support themselves independent of a modified wheelchair. Students claim their fieldwork experiences at Murray Center assisted them greatly when taking their National Board for Certification for Occupational Therapy. The students would welcome the opportunity for employment at Murray if the positions were available.

The benefits of having Occupational Therapy readily available on site at Murray Center are significant. The individuals' who need a splinting program, or possibly a piece of adaptive feeding equipment to maintain their independence with eating, or need some immediate adaptations to their environment due to maladaptive behaviors, receive the services instantly. The therapy departments are able to respond to their needs daily, and they do not have a waiting period to receive services.

I advocate for transition into community living when appropriate, but I truly believe the structured environment provided at Murray Developmental Center stabilizes the individuals' maladaptive behaviors. The number of Community Living options is simply not available and many of those that are transitioned return to Murray Center because the community setting cannot provide the level of care required to meet their needs. They return because they are more successful in life when they have a daily structured routine. They also appear to flourish through familiarity, which includes longevity with staff and environment, as well as receiving excellent therapeutic and medical services daily. The staff provides consistency to the individuals and is very well trained to manage extreme behaviors.

I support Murray Center as an employee and also as a resident of Centralia, IL. This community would be devastated by its closure. The economic impact will go beyond the Centralia area and will affect more than the employees. Businesses will close, tax revenues will decrease and the population will decrease as people move out of the area and possibly out of the state to find employment. The community will also feel the loss of the residents who are part of our community. I urge Governor

Quinn to reconsider this closure and support the families who have chosen Murray Center as HOME to their loved ones. Do not force the individuals to move to the community setting. Many have attempted that choice and have concluded Murray Center is their BEST option.

Sincerely,

Lori Demijan, OTR/L
1957 Frazier
Centralia, IL 62801

Murray Center: A Right to Life?

A spokesman from Governor Quinn's office recently appeared on KDSK and stated Quinn would "close Murray Center to provide better care for its residents." The spokesman's statement provokes many questions. First, if closure is to provide "better care" why did Quinn previously only announce closing Murray Center as a budget cut? Secondly, is it true Quinn received letters from owners of CILA Facilities stating Illinois law did not require them to take Murray people and that their facilities and staff weren't equipped to handle Developmentally Disabled and Mentally Incapacitated people? Perhaps a FOIA inquiry would reveal if CILA facility owners report their facilities inadequate. Lastly, some individuals close to Murray's closing found a closure of a similar facility at Lincoln, Illinois may have caused twenty nine (29) deaths. Is this true? If this 'past statistic' is a 'future fact', and if the Murray Center's closure remains unaltered, then a similar percentage of individuals will die. If true, closing Murray is a 'death sentence for innocents'. Their crime? Being born with multiple disabilities! Illinois doesn't put murderers or rapists to death yet it is feared a Murray closure may put lives in jeopardy. Perhaps, an investigation could put this concern to rest. Ancient Sparta and Nazi Germany eliminated people with disabilities. In the United States of America our Founding Fathers enshrined a God given, natural right to life, in the Constitution.

"Among the natural rights of the colonists are these: First a right to life, secondly to liberty, and thirdly to property; together with the right to defend them in the best manner they can." Samuel Adams, Founding Father

Rev. Dr. Philip W. Chapman

Pastor, Zion UCC, Central City, Illinois

My name is Deborah Opolony I have worked at Murray Center for 24 yrs. The type of testimony I will be giving will be written for filing. The residents at Murray are integrated as part of the community. They would not get the same loving care that they receive at Murray in the Community. In the community they would not be treated individually as they are at Murray Center. The families of the individuals should have the said as to where their love ones would get the best care and not told where to place them where they would not get the loving care. So many Group Homes are so under staff the individuals do not get the best care. At Murray Center the individuals are treated like you would treat your own children. The individuals are like your own children because they are special. If a individual is ready to go out in the community to a Group Home then that is when they should leave Murray Center not because the state says they want to close the facility. So many individuals are not ready to be moved from a place that they have know as home for so many years. This would disrupt their life style. Services that are available may not be available when the State stops paying for them and the individuals can enjoy the leisure recreation they once did. At Murray Center if some of the individuals are having a bad day and want to talk to staff they know that staff is there to listen to them and take the time to talk to them. At a Group Home will you find staff that will take time to do this. The individuals with severe behavior problems can't be cared for with only a couple of staff. At Murray we have a lot more staff that can care for the situation and talk the individuals out of their behaviors. The severe behavior will more and likely be put on drugs, in a psych unit or in jail for their behavior this will be their new treatment which will not be a good thing if put out in the community. We have a lot a trained professionals that can deals with these behaviors. Murray Center is wheelchair accessible and is ground level. It is one of the newest facility and cleanest one. Families can take their love ones on walks around the he facility and sit at the pavilions or picnic tables. Some of the individuals have been out at Murray for 26 years. There are 550 employees at Murray. One – fourth are husbands and wives both working there. That would be two incomes being lusted. The unemployment rate in this area is already high. 550 jobs being lost would add to that. Losing that many jobs would effect many businesses and services in this town. Many employees would have to move out of town to find a another job. It is not a bad ideal to try and close Murray Center when it has been in this town for 50 years and striving good. At Murray are individuals are able to get out in the community by going bowling, going to show, shopping, so many other activities even the wheelchairs are able to get out in the community and enjoy it. If they go to Group Homes are they going to be able to get out with less staff and when state money quits.

Deborah Opolony

Please consider this my written testimony in strong opposition to the closure of Murray Center.

I am a registered nurse and have been employed at Murray Center for 12 years. I care individuals with severe medical, physical, and behavioral challenges. I consider it a privilege to care for this precious, fragile population. I am proud of the level of care we provide. The State of Illinois has strict, high standards for the level of care for their SODC's. community providers will not be able to provide the consistent staffing numbers along with the nursing and medical care that will meet their needs. Many of the individuals living at Murray Center have tried other options only to find those options do not provide for their complex needs. Will attempting community reintegration be yet another obstacle and disappointment for our residents and their families? Will lower staffing numbers mean an increase in medication which would lead to a lower quality of life? Will cost be shifted elsewhere and end up costing the The State of Illinois more?

I believe I have a moral and ethical responsibility to advocate for this vulnerable population - to give a voice to the voiceless. Some spend their lives in wheelchairs, unable to speak or cry. They are unable to care for themselves or stand up for their right to live lives restored with dignity and compassion. You know as well as I do that this population is not a one-size-fits-all. Why are these disabled citizens being

targeted by a group that is supposed to be advocating for their equal protection under the law? Instead of advocating for them, they want to take their rights away so they cannot realize their goals of where and how they live, learn, work, and play. This negligent. These men and women are not budgetary line items that should be utilized to give the appearance of fiscal responsibility and sound, financial decision-making. Our human assets cannot afford to be your economic liabilities.

It is shameful and embarrassing to me as both a citizen and taxpayer to have my government want to balance the budget on its most vulnerable and marginalized constituents. I pray that my government is not using the developmental disabled as political pawns! As you go about your life, vacation plans, ballgames, and enjoying what you have been given, remember these disabled citizens whose lives depend on your decision. Surely a society is judged by how it cares for its most vulnerable and politically powerless. Some of our residents require critical care. Others are so medically fragile that they are wholly dependent on the specialized care that we provide. Their families need our help, but we need your support. I believe I see Christ behind the faces of my residents. I pray that God will bless you and guide you as you make your decision. I also pray that God may preserve your health so that neither you nor your family ever has to learn to negotiate the daily and weekly challenges that our residents face with courage and conviction.

Sincerely,

Nancy Tepe
10810 Coal Ford Road
Okawville, Illinois

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to state my opposition to the closure of Murray Center in Centralia, Illinois. My experience with Murray Center is that of Registered Dietitian/Dietary Manager for the past 22 years. Prior to this time period, I was a consulting dietitian for Murray Center, two days a week for seven years. During that seven year period of consulting, I worked at many other medical care facilities such as medium and small sized hospitals, nursing homes, and a developmentally disabled group home. Of all the care facilities I entered, Murray Center stood out for the level of care the individuals received.

It does not seem necessary for Murray Center to close, for the State of Illinois, to comply with the American Disability Act, and Olmstead decision. The Ligas v. Hamos Consent Decree does not effect State Operated Developmental Centers. All these pieces of legislature are not meant to force individuals out of institutions, if the individual does not want another type of community-based living. Individuals are meant to have a choice in deciding the types of services and settings they prefer to live, for a fulfilling and productive life.

In the Supreme Court ruling of the Olmstead decision, the Justices gave the opinion of “nothing in the American Disabilities Act or the implementation of it’s regulations condones termination of institutional settings for person unable to handle or benefit from community settings”. The opinion is that the States must ensure people with disabilities are given the choice to live in a community based setting (their homes, family homes, or other community settings). In the Supreme Court ruling of Olmstead v. L.C., the “court concluded that, under Title II of the ADA, States are required to provide community based treatment for persons with mental disabilities **when** 1. the State’s treatment professionals determine that such placement is appropriate, 2. the affected persons do not oppose such treatment, and 3. the placement can be reasonably accommodated, taking into account the resources available to the State and the needs of others with mental disabilities”. The court opinion states “ the ADA is not reasonably read to impel States to phase out institutions, placing patients in need of close care - at risk”. The opinion goes on to say individuals placed in community settings “may need institutional care from time to time”. “For other individuals, no placement outside the institution may ever be appropriate”.

The terms of the Ligas v. Hamos Consent Decree seems to cover individuals who live in private ICFs-DD (Intermediate Care Facilities), nine beds or more, but does not seem to cover individuals who live in State Operated Developmental Centers. This Consent Decree gives individuals the right to stay in private ICFs-DD institutions if they choose rather than smaller community-based placement. Why not give those living in State institutions the same choice..

The State of Illinois, as well as other States in this country, will have to carry the cost of keeping some institutions open. Murray Center has majority of the residents who do not meet the requirements for community placement, some for their fragile medical conditions, other for their behavioral issues. Many residents have guardians who express yearly, their desire for the individual they are responsible, to **not** be considered for any placement other than Murray Center. It seems forcing individuals to leave their home of Murray Center, would also be a violation of their rights.

Murray Center needs to stay open because it provides the best care for the people who live here. These people should be given the same opportunity to stay in their home, as others get to choose where they will live; in private ICFs-DD, their home, or other community-based setting.

Sandi Timmons

I was informed by the Murray Development Center that there is a decision pending concerning the closure of this facility.

My brother has been a resident of Murray Development Center for over 30 years. It has been his home, his haven. The care provided by Murray Development Center is exceptional and this facility NEEDS to remain open. I have always had a wonderful relationship with the staff at the center and their respect

for the residents extends to their family. I have never been concerned that my brother was not receiving the best development and medical care. When I first heard that the center was facing possible closure my heart sunk. I was and am very frightened for my brother. He needs specific, daily care and that is what Murray Development Center provides at the highest level.

My brother was in a facility prior to moving to Murray Development Center in which the whole facility smelled of feces and urine. No one on one care was provided to my brother at this facility. Nothing could compare to the treatment and care he receives at Murray Development Center. When he was moved to Murray Development Center it was a Godsend. I cannot put into words how devastating it would be to face the possibility of having to move my brother at this point in his life.

-----THIS IS HIS HOME!!-----

I am not sure how to express how this news has affected my life already. I am begging and praying that this facility remains open. Please, please reconsider the decision to close Murray Development Center as the effect would be devastating to not only the residents, but also to the caregivers and the community.

Sincerely,
Diane Exbom

Dear Gov Quinn,

I have worked at Murray center for 24 years which 23 of those years i worked in direct care.I am now working in activities. My coworkers and I take them alot of different places Bowling,Movies,Restaurants, Zoo,Shopping ect...We also have a great activity center on grounds where they can come anytime and make choices to do what they enjoy doing. What a job WELL DONE to see laughter on there faces and also hugs and thank yous!!! They deserve to keep their homes!! Please dont take that away from them where they are loved so much and get great care and treated with respect and dignity!!!! PLEASE COME AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!!! thank you for your time :)

Debra K Belcher MHT5
RR#2 BOX 95A
PATOKA,IL 62875

I am the court-appointed guardian and sibling (brother) of Scott Williams, a 61-year old resident of Murray Developmental Center. Scott was transferred from the now closed Howe Developmental Center

in Tinley Park a few years ago. He is faring much better under the staff of Murray than under Howe. My visits to Scott at Murray confirm that the staff there is very dedicated to a high quality of care. Scott's much-needed weight gain is one indicator of the better care.

He also is one resident who could not go to community-based housing. His developmental symptoms are so profound that 24 hour nearby care is required, often on a one-to-one basis.

I live in East Tennessee and cannot attend the Centralia COGFA hearing on April 20, so I am using this E-mail to register my opposition to Murray's closing.

Sincerely

Kent A. Williams

Hello,

I am writing to ask you not to close Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. I am the mother of a son who lives in Shapiro. My son, as I am sure most of the individuals at Murray, have unsuccessfully attempted to live in a CILA. It is a wonderful option if the person can make it. But many cannot. Please let Murray stay open. The people who reside there need their home. What will become of them when they are forced to move into a CILA and it fails? Live in the hospital? End up incarcerated because of disruptive behavior. And we know that happens every day.. They will yet again feel like a failure. Just one more put down to add to the long list of failures for them. Many will require high increase in their psychotropic medications. This may in turn affect their health.

The individuals who live at Murray are counting on us, with functional and working brains, to make the best choices for them. To keep them safe. To keep them in the least restrictive environment, which State Ops are for the people who live at Murray and other developmental centers. We must act responsibly!

I asked one advocacy group what will happen when the state ops are no more and my son fails at a CILA yet again? His response was we should have gotten him out of the State Ops sooner. Our folks do not accept change easily. Instead many decompensate when even small changes occur in their lives, imagine what a change in residence and caretakers will do to them? It would simply be cruel to make them move!

PLEASE DO NOT CLOSE MURRAY!

Cynthia Bogue
18437 Glen Oak Ave.
Lansing, IL. 60438

Murray Center provides excellent care to approximately 280 special need residents. These patients can't care for themselves. They suffer from PICA, brittle bone syndrome, and aggressive behaviors. PICA patients pick up and eat whatever is near. Those suffering brittle bone syndrome easily break bones if not protected. Aggressive patients may be predisposed to attack others. Some individuals with progressive deterioration can't move themselves and must be repositioned every two hours to prevent bed sores. The 550 Murray Center Staff provides care other facilities can't.

Gov. Quinn will cancel Murray's essential services and place the residents in (CILLA)smaller facilities. This plan will not work. First, smaller facilities have only one or two staff. They will be unable to provide the 24 hour care patients needing 2 hour repositioning to prevent bed sores need with only 1 or 2 staff. Second, aggressive personalities must always be handled by two staff. What will happen to the other residents while the staff work with this one patient? Thirdly, Murray Center provides 24 hour security, nursing care and building maintenance. This is logistically impossible in small facilities. Has Gov. Quinn visited Murray Center to talk with patients, their families? Has he visited Murray Center to see what is being done and how it is done?

PLEASE KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN AND LET IT DO THE JOB IT HAS BEEN DOING SO WELL!!!!

Sincerely,
Evelyn Courtney
Retired Teacher

Throughout my life, I've experienced life with people with a variety of disabilities, including developmental disabilities and cognitive disabilities. I cannot envision a life without them in it, friends and family alike. All of these people have experienced life in the community using home based services and have done so successfully. I have worked as a personal attendant in human services, brother and son to siblings and parents with disabilities, worked as a teacher in special education and currently work in an independent living center seeking accessible and affordable housing. My variety of experiences across all domains of living have granted me unique perspectives of independence and interdependency very successful with appropriate supports. I feel strongly the towns and employees and residents at each of these centers can continue to thrive and provide excellent service and do so in the community using home based supports. Any argument indicating greater affordability, loss of jobs and jarring circumstances for residents used to a particular lifestyle are arguing from a perspective of fear; fear of the unknown and fear of change. If they use even half the love they have demonstrated at public hearings condemning the closures to instead implement home based services, these towns would be beacons of light to independent living and the Constitutional right afforded to EVERY citizen in this great country.

Thank you, Scott Nance

It depends on those who pass, whether I am a tomb or a treasure, whether I speak or I am silent. -
Inscription over Paris museum

To Whomever It May Concern,

I, Sheila R. Kapes, do hereby oppose Governor Quinn's decision to close the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, Illinois.

My 22 year old daughter Kassidy lives at a 16-bed group home in Centralia and attends Kaskaskia Workshop. Many of Kassi's friends at the workshop are residents of Murray Center and many of my friends work at Murray Center. Centralia does an awesome job caring for and providing services to its developmentally disabled population. The presence of Murray Center has no doubt served as the catalyst for a network of organizations geared toward making our community accessible to all of its residents. Because of Murray Center, the people of Centralia understand more than most the challenges faced by those with special needs and we strive to obliterate the greatest challenge by accepting them for who they are. Centralia is doing it right.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sheila R. Kapes
1963 Shook Lane
Centralia, Illinois 62801

I feel that the decision to close Murray Center is ill-advised. Many of the residents are not suited for independent or assisted living centers as they require round the clock care or very specialized care. They will then need to be placed in centers that may not be able to give them the care they need. Or they could be placed in centers that are great distances from their families, which would create a hardship on those families as they may not be able to travel longer distances and may have to reduce the frequency of their visits. This, coupled with the removal from the home they have always known, has the potential to cause serious disruption in the lives of people who do much better with a familiar routine and well-known caregivers.

That said, I also feel that the closure of Murray Center would be devastating for our area; not just Centralia. People from many surrounding towns and counties depend on their jobs at Murray Center. The businesses in and around Centralia depend on those people being able to purchase their products and services. There are no other job options here. Even before the recent recession, the economy in the Centralia area (and most of southern Illinois) has been struggling. The loss of the center and the jobs will do irreparable harm to our area's fragile economy.

We have never been given the actual reasons for the decision to close Murray Center; but I can not imagine that they could justify this decision. Murray Center is one of the better run state institutions. I believe that a rational, fair, and realistic review of the situation will result in a reversal of the decision. Thank you for your time.

Janet Bray CISR

I am writing because I want you to reconsider closing Murray Center. The people that live there call it home and some have been there since it was opened. These people could not make it somewhere else. This is the only home they know. Most are so OCD that change would kill them. They know what is going to happen everyday and need that structure to survive. We take good care of them and think of them as family. You think you know what is good for them when your not with them everyday. We know them as well as our own family. How would you feel if I came up to you and told you what I think would be good for your family? You would be mad and tell us to leave you alone.

I was always a factory worker and even though Murray Center has been here 48 years I knew little about it until 3 years ago when I started working there. I too thought it was an institution and would be cold but it's not. They are part of the community and I didn't know how much until I started working there. Please do not close their home.....

As for my side of this issue I worked at Littelfuse for 26 years until it closed in 2002 and then I went to school for 2 1/2 years. So ruffly 4 1/2 years I worked other factory jobs like Pulsar Plastics, Gilster - MaryLee. Then I worked Alcan and Tech Ind which both closed. There have been 11 factories closed in the last 20 years in Centralia. Then I went to work at North American Lighting in December 2006 and got laid-off in May 2008 I actually thought I would get to keep this job and then I worked part-time at Dollar General till I went to Murray Center. I am 54 years old and I have worked for minimum wage at most of my jobs since Littelfuse closed which means out of 6 jobs, 4 paid minimum wage. Don't tell me there are jobs, good paying jobs because I have been there looking for them. I love my job and the people I take care of.

I don't have it in me anymore to look for a job that isn't there. I can't make it on minimum wage and that's all we have in this area. This town will dry up if Murray Center closes and the people that live there will die if they have to go some where else. Please think about this real hard before you decide to close Murray Center it is their home.

Tara Reynolds

I operate a funeral business in Centralia. I know the Murray Center for disabled people is on Governor Quinn's closure list. First of all, let me say, I do not have any family or friends who work there nor do I do any kind of business with the Murray Center so I do not have a first hand vested interest in it's operation. However, I can assure you that closing this facility would be a definite "fatal blow" to an already economically distressed community. I truly feel the Governor is using this for political reasons and not financial. Please reconsider this move.

Sincerely,

Mark S Styninger

To whom it may concern:

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information on how important it is to our community to Save Murray Center, and the Animal Disease Laboratory located in Centralia, IL. My name is Vivian Creed. I have been the fifth grade teacher at Odin Elementary School for 33 years. Many parents of our students are employed at Murray Center which provides their family income. If Murray Center would be shut down the employees would be forced to move out of our area due to a lack of jobs anyway. This would also have an effect on our hospital and other local establishments that are patronized by the residents and employees of Murray Center. Job devastation, destroying families and homes is not an acceptable plan to improve Illinois. Governor Quinn fails to grasp the harm of closing facilities like Murray Center and The Animal Disease Lab.

Murray Center provides excellent care to approximately 280 special needs residents. These residents cannot care nor some speak for themselves, making it a priority that these people do not fall through the cracks in our system and suffer from inappropriate care. As many families have testified and it has been demonstrated in the past and present situations, community care facilities are not an appropriate solution for most of these individuals. My husband and daughter are both currently employed at Murray Center, as well as my parents both retired from Murray Center all taking pride in their jobs.

I hope you can vision what an important part of our community Murray Center and the Animal Disease Lab are. The individuals at Murray Center, families, and employees fate relies on your decisions. While Illinois remains in a budget crisis I pray that a sensible solution sparing innocent individuals can be found. Your support would be appreciated in helping SAVE MURRAY CENTER and the ANIMAL DISEASE LAB in CENTRALIA, IL.

Sincerely,
Vivian Creed

Hello my name is Karenza (Kate) Luster I am writing you with concerns that the Murray Center may be closed. My position is opponent. I am the mother of Carl William Luster and the Murray Center is the best location for my son. I am not able to travel due to my broken hip so I have to try and get someone to bring me to this location when they can which is not often. The Staff there is great with my son and they keep me update with his health and health needs they call me so that my son can hear my voice from time to time and when I call they get him to the phone. When my son was up in Lincoln IL, I was not able to visit him because I could not pay someone to take me to Lincoln,IL . The Center is a good location for me since il am on a fixed income. With times being hard for nearly everyone these days please do not close the center.

Sincerely,
Karenza Luster

To whom it may concern:

I am writing in opposition of the proposed closure of Murray Center in Centralia. I have been a Habilitation Program Coordinator for 10 years at Murray. I'm currently attending SIUE through the Upward Mobility Program persuing my masters in social work. I'm also doing my practicum at Murray Center with a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Putting my emotions aside, I decided to stick to the facts and get to the bare bones.

Murray Center provides excellent service for the people who live there. They provide excellent medical services with caring doctors and nurses, and structured programming that ranges from teaching daily living skills to implementing behavior programs. The individuals who can show excitement and affection towards us (employees) show it; those that cannot express their emotions in a conventional way still receive the love and care they deserve. We know the people we care for. We know how to make their day go well and we know the reasons they may not be having a good day. We are their caregivers and we love them. They are people, not "clients" not "patients" and not "dollar signs". They have rights and it is my responsibility to advocate for their rights.

Gov Quinn, as well as those in favor of the proposed closure believe that everyone in SODCs can be served in the community. People who live at Murray are served in the community. In community stores, resturants, churches, movie theaters, and bowling alleys etc. We are their community and their family. People who live at Murray Center are known in Centralia as well as the surrounding areas; they attend community functions as much as possible.

Many people who live at Murray Center live there because of their need for structure. Not just the physical structure of an accessible environment but also the structure of the staff and the low turnover rate. It is a fact that a stable environment is necessary in order for people to live full lives. People affect their enviornment as much as their environment affects them. If you take the people who call Murray Center home and put them into an enviornment that does not provide a goodness of fit or stability, they will not thrive.

Please reconsider closing Murray Center. Please do not save money at the expense of society's most vulnerable population.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wernsman
PO Box 55
Irvington IL 62848

DHS: Overview of the Ligas v. Hamos Lawsuit

Illinois Department of Human Services

Michelle R.B. Saddler, Secretary

Overview of the Ligas v. Hamos Lawsuit

The Ligas v. Hamos lawsuit was filed on July 28, 2005, on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities who were residing in private, State-funded facilities (Intermediate Care Facilities for Persons with Developmental Disabilities or ICFs/DD) of nine or more persons or who were at risk of being placed in such facilities. Plaintiffs sought placement in Community-Based Settings and receipt of community-based services. On June 15, 2011, a fairness hearing was held and, on the same day, a Consent Decree was approved by the Court. The Consent Decree, which is available on the Division of Developmental Disabilities' (DDD) web site, identifies two groups of Class Members:

--Adult individuals in Illinois with developmental disabilities who qualify for Medicaid Waiver services, who reside in ICFs/DD with nine or more residents, and **who affirmatively request** to receive Community-Based Services or placement in a Community-Based Setting.

--Adult individuals in Illinois with developmental disabilities who qualify for Medicaid Waiver services, who reside in a Family Home, who are in need of Community-Based Services or placement in a Community-Based Setting, and who affirmatively request Community-Based Services or placement in a Community-Based Setting.

The Decree does not force individuals who do not want community-based services or placement to move. Nor does it force providers to close beds or enter into downsizing agreements with the State against their will.

The tenets of the Decree will assist the DDD in expanding its community-based system to meet the growing demand for those services, while continuing to honor an individual's choice in deciding on the types of services and settings he or she prefers in order to live a personally fulfilling and productive life.

The Decree includes the following provisions:

1. Services for Individuals Currently Residing in ICFs/DD

Within six years of approval of the Decree, all individuals living in ICFs/DD as of the effective date of the Decree **who have affirmatively requested** Community-Based Settings will move to Community-Based Settings. Placements must be implemented for one-third of all such individuals every two years of this six-year period. **For those individuals who wish to continue living in an ICF/DD, the Decree requires the State to honor that choice and to continue to provide adequate funding to meet the needs of such individuals.**

2. Services for Individuals Currently Residing in the Family Home

The DDD will continue to expeditiously serve all people who meet the established crisis criteria. There will be no limit to the number of people served who meet the crisis criteria.

The DDD will serve 3000 individuals on the Waiting List for Community-Based Services or placement in a Community-Based Setting, as defined in the Decree, over the next six years (1,000 within the first two years and 500 each year the next four years) with home-based support services or in community-based residential settings. At the end of the six year period, all Class members on the Waiting List shall move off the Waiting List at a reasonable pace.

3. Other General Provisions

--Evaluations and Transition Service Plans will focus on individual desires and goals and will not be limited by existing services. All services and supports in the Transition Service Plan must be integrated into the community to the maximum extent appropriate and consistent with the choices of the class member and his or her legal guardian. The State, however, will not be required to develop or offer services that are not part of the approved Waiver or Medicaid State Plan.

--The Department of Human Services (DHS) will seek sufficient funds in annual budget requests to develop and maintain the services described in the Decree. Implementation of the Decree is not, however, dependent on legislative appropriation of new funds.

--A Monitor was appointed on July 19, 2011, by the Court to oversee compliance with the Decree and report on progress to the Court on an annual basis. After nine years of the approval of the Decree, the State may petition the Court to terminate the monitoring process.

--An Implementation Plan was filed with the Court on December 15, 2011.

Submitted by Margie and Greg Barton

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in support of closing Tamms. I want you to know that I am concerned about the well-being of correctional officers. As long as we have prisons, I do not want the people who work in them to be attacked or terrorized. But for a number of reasons, I do not believe that Tamms is not actually necessary for the overall management of the Illinois prison system. As you know, the Illinois Department of Corrections themselves have made this argument in recent months, and no one knows better than they do what the system capacities are, and what the prisoners inside Tamms are. If they are saying they don't need Tamms, it seems pretty convincing.

As you know, the prison is expensive. But I wanted to point your attention to the Belleville News Democrat's calculation of the actual cost of Tamms, in case someone else has not done so; the \$64,000 per prisoner per year figure that has been repeatedly quoted as the prison's cost is average of the cost of the minimum security part of Tamms with the supermax part. The Belleville News Democrat's investigation says that it is \$90,000 per prisoner per year to run Tamms.

The prison is also impractical in that it is counter-productive: it actually damages prisoners' mental and social abilities, making them less able to get along with others, should they be released into society or into the general population of another prison. As you know, many of them will be released eventually. Meanwhile, there is no evidence that Tamms is responsible for the decrease in overall violence in the prison population since the "bad old days" of the early 90's.

I know the harm that is done to prisoners in long-term solitary confinement is difficult to prove and to see. But I beg you to imagine for a moment that it is real. There are many credible parties who argue that it is real. The social and mental deterioration that occurs when humans don't have interactions with others is well-documented going back to the 1950's, in studies of astronauts, monkeys, and torture interrogation techniques. Prisoners at Guantanamo were kept in solitary confinement for weeks as part of their preparation for interrogation, because we know that isolation makes people psychologically vulnerable. And as you know, other states have come to the conclusion that prolonged isolation damages their correctional goals.

If long-term solitary confinement is counter-productive and expensive, and if there are humane alternatives, we should cut our losses on this expensive and misguided experiment in corrections.

Thank you,

Nadya Pittendrigh

April 13, 2012

Dear Members of the Illinois General Assembly,

My 49-year-old brother, Brian, has been a resident of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia for 8 years. Brian has Bipolar Disorder, Asperger's Autism, Mental Retardation, Suicidal Ideation, along with Bronchial Asthma, Coronary Artery Disease, Diabetes, history of Heart Attack, Hypertension, Sleep Apnea, GERD, and other medical issues. In my opinion, Murray center is the best thing that ever happened to Brian. He is more stable now than he has ever been.

Over the course of his life, my parents and various state agencies, caseworkers, psychiatrists and psychologists worked to try and find a place where Brian could live and get the care and support he needs. A number of different settings were tried, including six different group homes in different locations in Illinois. In every setting, very serious problems developed, which always led to the renewed search for another setting that might be appropriate for him. And to another difficult transition.

At Murray Center, Brian's moods and behavior problems are handled with skill and respect, and his medical problems are monitored and managed on a daily basis.

I ask that as you consider whether to allow Murray Center to remain open, that you please consider my brother and many others like him who are being well cared for there, who would not be able to function or get the care and daily monitoring/management of their medical conditions in a community setting.

Respectfully,

Rosanne Megenity

The sister of one of the Murray Center residents, Debra Hester, came into Easter Seals at the end of her long work day. Mary was exhausted and determined as she explained to me how Easter Seals in Joliet had done the best we could for her younger sister growing up. Debra has been at the Murray Center for 47 years! She is significantly medically challenged with a feeding tube, non-ambulatory and non-verbal. Mary worries about the closure and where her sister would live and be properly cared for. She knows no other home. Thank you for considering the loving family members of those who were placed as youngsters at Murray Center.

Debra Condotti
President/CEO
Easter Seals Joliet Region, Inc.

April 13, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Attn: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

Respected Leaders,

I am writing to indicate my position to support keeping Warren G. Murray Developmental Center open. I am a Registered Physical Therapist at this facility that is responsible to maintain and regain functional mobility, whenever possible, for the individuals that are capable. There are those individuals that depend on staff for their repositioning in bed and wheelchair as well as for their mobility on or off cottage, which will require intervention to prevent contractures of bilateral upper and lower extremity. Osteoporosis is also a concern and try to abate through active and passive range of motion and other weight bearing activities. Rehabilitation post hospitalization is very important because these types of individuals do not fare well when debilitated without verbal and physical interaction of the type that is typical from staff that have claimed them as their own. Also, the more recent admissions have different needs that are just as important because they seem to thrive on attention and alternative forms of interactions that seem to be quite different from the group homes they came from. One individual requires shoe inserts due to bilateral flat feet and complaints of knee pain. I had to fabricate him arch supports because he does not have any funds and the vendor will not accept a State of Illinois PO number. Murray Developmental Center has extensive attributes that deal with day to day operations requiring modifications and interventions that are completely fabricated here.

The State of Illinois had initiated a task force that was to unify the approach of fabricating wheelchairs for residents of all facilities which all involved had to receive training in 2000. Money was available, but the amount kept dwindling down up until 2009 at which point it had ended. Another resource had to be acquired and now we are dealing with a vendor that bills Medicare, but all Public Aid individuals will continue to have their wheelchairs fabricated here. Even with the wheelchairs having been specifically addressed to each individual's needs, this facility still has to modify them to attain safety and neutral support as is required due to their diagnosis. Shapiro is also utilizing a vendor and Fox will be approached by our vendor who has 2 offices near the Chicago area.

Murray Developmental Center is a very resilient facility that I have been involved with since 1983. I remember the earlier wheelchairs that involved very unique fabrication techniques to address scoliosis rib humps that still, even now, we cannot duplicate in its simplistic form. No matter what, this facility is able to address any and all adversities with creative, safe, need specific, financially equitable, and client appropriate interventions that ultimately leads to success stories for the people that we serve.

This brings me to my query; for a State that has been entrusted to oversee the needs of many, to whom all possible data and by virtue of their positions, hopefully understands people's positions and concerns, would make any other decision that does not underscore the importance of each and all residents of the State of Illinois. It's an ongoing and relentless fear of disappointment

from leaders, having been entrusted with our lives and dependent upon for guidance, seems contradictory to what they stand for. Initial press release indicated closure of facilities are due to budgetary limitations and now, as from the recent Murray Parents Association visit to Springfield, due to the need for individuals to be transitioned to a less restrictive environment. Therefore, as a citizen of a state that is in the limelight and various uncomplimentary notoriety, I am not sure what Illinois wants to be famous for, with all the circumstances and statistics available for all to read, what future would you leave us with.

With Regards,
Francis C. Lazo
429 Randolph Drive
Centralia, IL 62801

It with a tragic for you to close Murray Center for the residents who live there for years it with very sad to lock them out of their home . We working parent needs this to stay open if this close it will very hard for us to work . The staff there is very helpful and very dedicated and excellent when come to thier health needs and medical care and challenging behavior, so I plead with you not to close Murray Center down. Closing the center you might as well stand and watch them die . A carrying friend ,please,please help these residents.

Mazell Brown

April 13, 2012

COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to oppose the closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL.

I am a 28 year employee of Murray Center, the last 12 years as a Health Information Associate in the Medical Records Department. Part of my job responsibilities are statistics for Murray Center, which include ages, diagnoses, levels of retardation, length of stay, ambulation status, admissions/readmissions and discharges. I am aware of how important these statistics are, and I wanted to be sure that this factual information is made available to you.

Of our current population of 275, the breakdown in the following categories is as follows:

Level of retardation:

- Profound mental retardation = 182
- Severe mental retardation = 50
- Moderate mental retardation = 23
- Mild mental retardation = 20

As you can see, 232 individuals (84% of this population) are in the profound and severe range. One size does not fit all.....the level of retardation factors into placement possibilities. Profoundly and severely mentally retarded individuals would require more attention in self-care skills. However, there are many other diagnoses contributing to an individual's placement options or lack thereof (see list below). The mildly or moderately mentally retarded individuals require less help with self-care skills, but many have psychiatric or behavioral issues, being the reason for their placement at Murray.

Other diagnoses of the Murray Center population (275) that factor into placement options: *(Please note that these numbers are duplicated, meaning that some individuals (actually most) have several of these diagnoses and some other diagnoses not listed here).*

Epilepsy - 175

Cerebral Palsy – 105

Diabetes – 13

Gastrostomy tubes – 56

Jejunostomy tubes – 3

Tracheostomy – 2

Colostomy – 2

Ileostomy – 1

Autism/Pervasive Developmental Disorder -27

Intermittent Explosive Disorder - 24

Psychotic Disorder - 58

Bipolar Disorder - 45

Impulse Control Disorder - 27

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder - 22

ADHD - 8

Schizophrenia – 15

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease – 92
Osteoporosis – 104
Osteopenia – 84
Scoliosis – 56
Asthma – 23
PICA behavior - 35

Anxiety Disorder - 10
Shunts - 5
Pacemaker/Defibrillator - 2
Vagal Nerve Stimulators – 3
Baclofen Pump – 3

These, of course, are not all the diagnoses, but some of the more common ones among the Murray Center population.

Page 2

Age: 20-75, with the average age being 47.

Length of Stay:

- Minimum = 115 days
- Maximum = 47 years
- Average = 23.5 years

Ambulation status:

Ambulatory – 143

Ambulatory with staff assistance or walker (and/or need of wheelchair for distances) - 35

Non-ambulatory – 97 *(Please note that Murray Center is 100% wheelchair accessible)*

Admitted from:

- Transfers from other SODC (state-op developmental centers): 80 (30%)
- Family home: 96 (34%)
- Other (CILA, ICF/DD, SNF, Group homes): 99 (36%)

Therefore, 36% were admitted to Murray Center as a last resort, having already been in other community placements that failed for various reasons, or placement would not have been sought at Murray. 29% came as transfers from other SODCs, so it is unlikely that they were suitable for placement into the community, or they would have been placed there rather than coming to Murray Center. The remaining 30% came from their family homes when the parents/guardians could no longer care for them.

For 2007-2011 (5-year period):

Admissions: 52

Discharges: 87 (Comparing discharges to admissions for the 5 year period, the placement rate is 167%)

Of the 87 discharges during this 5-year period, there were 13 re-admissions to Murray Center or another SODC following placement into the community, the majority due to behavioral issues, which in turn can become safety issues. Murray Center serves as a safety net for those placements that aren't successful. Taking Murray Center out of the equation, what will happen to those individuals whose placements aren't successful? Also, of those 87 discharges, there were (that we are aware of) **7 deaths that occurred at the community placements**. *(Please note that deaths following discharges to skilled nursing facilities (SNF) were not factored into this accounting, or the number would be greater).*

Thank you for your consideration of these factual statistics in making your decision.

Sincerely,

Denise Lueking
116 S. Oak Street
Hoffman, IL 62250

April 13, 2012

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Subject: Opposing closure of Murray Center, Centralia, IL

Written filed testimony

From: Celeste Stratemeyer, MS-CCC/SLP

22 year Murray Center employee

Quality and cost of care are two reasons given for the closure of Murray Center. Quality and cost of care are tied together especially when considering the many supports and services needed by the individuals who call Murray Center home. The saying, "You get what you pay for" is true when looking at the many services provided at Murray Center vs. those provided in Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) homes.

As a speech-language pathologist, I know the importance of the communication and swallowing services provided at Murray Center. Murray Center operates under strict guidelines that state the frequency of services provided to residents. However, the day they are placed in a CILA home, apparently these services previously required are no longer necessary.

A 27 year old man was admitted to Murray Center in 1991 when the nursing home he resided in closed. Due to spastic quadriplegia, he was unable to voluntarily move his body. He was unable to speak. His

head was the only body part he had voluntary control over. He arrived in a dilapidated wheelchair and we were informed he could raise his eyes to answer “yes” and look to the side to answer “no”. Trained as specialists in augmentative communication systems, the speech-language pathology staff at Murray Center recognized this man’s dire need for a better method of communicating and he began his training to use a communication device. The device was accessed by way of a switch positioned at this right cheek. His entire world changed! I remember when he was first able to tell us his greatest fears and his biggest dreams. As he would master the use of the communication device, he was given an upgrade to a more sophisticated device containing more vocabulary. For the first time in his life, he was able to initiate a request for the nurse to check his gastrostomy tube or communicate his need for a breathing treatment. Today he utilizes a communication device with a 3000 word vocabulary which he masters in such a way as to form original sentences conveying his wants/needs, thoughts, opinions, questions, wishes, etc. Once his communication need was served, he expressed a desire to learn to read. With the access to advanced technology through computer software and adaptive equipment, this man learned to spell and read! When he heard the news of Murray Center’s proposed closure, using his communication device he said, “It feels like ’91 again”.

Today he continues to learn and grow his vocabulary and literacy skills through individualized speech therapy 4-5 times per week for 30 minutes each day.

In CILA homes, there is a therapy cap limiting the amount of speech therapy an individual can receive to 26 hours for the year or 52 hours for the year if a Medicaid waiver is obtained. Since this man is still progressing in his language and literacy skills, when speech-language therapy is no longer available, he will likely halt progression or lose some of the valuable skills he has learned while living at Murray Center.

Another individual was placed at Murray Center following the closure of Howe DC. He was not able to be placed into the community due to his diagnosis of brittle diabetes in addition to seizure disorder, right hemiplegia, and a tracheostomy due to bilateral vocal cord paralysis. Upon admission, he was evaluated for a new electronic communication device. Using the device, he was able to convey his quick wit and his love for the Cubs (even though he was now residing in Cardinal country!) He expressed his greatest desire was to have his tracheostomy tube removed. His Individualized Support Team set out to pursue this very personal goal. Enlisting the help of a superb ENT in Springfield, he underwent a series of procedures to open his airway just enough to allow for trach removal but keep his ability to eat/swallow intact. It took 18 months but today he is trach free and thrilled! He continues to receive daily speech therapy to strengthen his respiratory support and to enhance his communication abilities using the electronic communication device. He was able to transition off of the medically fragile cottage due to his improved condition. CILA providers have expressed to Murray Center staff their disinterest in admitting someone with brittle diabetes. With the statement that Murray Center will not discharge individuals to other State Operated Developmental Centers (SODC), where will he go?

As a speech-language pathologist, I have graduate level training in dysphagia. Dysphagia is a term used for a disorder of swallowing. At Murray Center individuals are monitored and evaluated during meals and snack time to ensure swallowing safety. Recommendations are made when difficulties arise to

prevent life threatening aspiration pneumonia or choking. CILA homes housing 2 or 4 individuals will not be able to afford the ongoing services of a speech-language pathologist. I spoke with a CILA provider last week who admitted there has never been a speech-language pathologist to come into their home.

Better care and more services cost money and it will cost the CILA homes, too, if they provide it. The \$84,000 cost quoted for a person in a 4 bed CILA home is the bare minimum cost (room, board, transportation). If additional services are needed (daily Nursing care, Speech-language therapy, Physical therapy, Occupational therapy, Dietician, Psychologist, Dentist, Social worker, Educator, Rec therapy) the cost of care in the CILA is comparable to the cost of care at Murray Center.

These additional services are not luxuries. They are the difference between housing individuals and habilitating them. What price does our society place on the quality of care for individuals with developmental disabilities?

Celeste Stratemeyer, MS-CCC/SLP
22 year Murray Center employee

Dear Members of COGFA,

I am e-mailing you today to encourage all of you to help the governor rethink and reverse his proposed decision to close Murray Center. This proposed closure is wrong on many levels.

My son Andy has been a resident of Murray Center since 2002. He will soon be 24 years old. He has autism spectrum disorder with OCD. Prior to Andy admission to Murray he was extremely aggressive towards me and other family members. He would rip eye glasses right off your face and break them. He would pick up and throw rear projection tv sets and turn over and throw furniture, as well as tear down ceiling fans. All this would occur if you would say no to one of his requests. Once he turned over a large computer armoire and I dove in front of it to keep it from falling on him. As a result of that incident I have a chronic shoulder problem. He also has had elopment issues. After many visits from the police, several hospitalizations, and being turned down by all residential facilities that programed for autistic children and adults in the state Illinois he was then admitted to Murray.

The days before he was admitted to Murray he was heavily medicated by his psychiatrist, so that we would all remain safe until his admission to Murray was complete. After being admitted the staff at Murray then started the process of reducing the medication to see just what they were dealing with. After sometime they began to see what we saw, including ripping off toilet seats and porcelain sinks, as well as severely biting himself. We have always made weekly visits to see Andy, and during this time when he was exhibiting aggressiveness, a staff member would always accompany us when we would take him off campus. Several times on home visits staff members would accompany him home for day visits,

birthday parties and holidays. He had one on one staffing at all times. Andy went through several medications changes and then the right medication combination was achieved. In therapy, with the help from our friends at the Illinois Center Autism and psychologists and staff from Murray and teachers and therapists from Kaskaskia Education Center brought Andy through this difficult time.

Today Andy still has one on one help but only during the day hours. He is calm and very charming. He requires some help with activities of daily living such as teeth brushing, bathing, and tying shoes. He can go to the bathroom on his own, but still needs help with wiping. Programs have been established by the Murray Center on everything he needs help with. He can dress himself. He does have some language and graduated from his school program in May of 2010. He now attends a work training program called Career Beginnings at Murray Center. We still continue to visit Andy weekly and he goes off campus to eat and goes to various activities in the Centralia area with us, and without the accompany of staff. Andy is well known and an accepted member of the Centralia community. He comes home about once every six weeks without staff, and stays from 1 to 3 days. We could not be any happier with his progress at Murray. It has always been the goal for Andy to live as independently as possible. It has always been the goal of Murray Center to help the residents get better and move to a less restrictive environment. Those decisions need to be strictly made by the Murray Center treatment team and the parents or guardians, not by the governor's office. Andy will never be able to be married or have a family of his own, but he has the next best thing. He has this wonderful extended family, his brothers on his cottage and a staff that loves him as if he was their own. Our biggest fear since autistic people need routine, if Andy would have to move, is that he would digress back into old behaviors.

As stated earlier, this proposed closure is wrong on many levels. It is wrong to balance the budget on the backs of the disabled. It is wrong to close a center that is well managed and operated as Murray is and makes money for the state. Yes, Murray is the only center that receives federal matching dollars and makes in excess of \$10 million above its costs. That money goes directly back into the Illinois General Fund! In a state that is 80 billion plus in debt, the voters of Illinois will never support an elected official who proposes to cut or close a center like Murray.

Respectfully Yours,

Denise Schoppet,
Bethalto, Il.,

Dear Sir or Madame,

I strongly urge you to advise against the closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. I understand the arguments for the current plan of closure, but I believe this plan to have been built with misguided aspirations.

Murray Center has provided a very high level of care for its residents for decades, and its record speaks volumes in support of this. One of the contributing factors to the caliber of the services delivered at Murray Center is fact that the staff are well paid for their work. Similar jobs in community-based homes pay around minimum wage and do not give incentive enough for employees to stay in the position or to perform well. This typically leads to high turnovers and therefore inexperienced, poorly trained employees, which foster neither safe nor productive environment for the people dependent on them. By contrast well paid employees that are given even the slightest glimmer of a future within their current station will more often than not stick around long enough to cultivate an actual working skill-set and develop trust with those dependent on them.

I believe that in place of a destructive plan to reduce costs a productive plan would do more in the long run. Instead of closing Murray Center I would suggest that the state invest in making the facility more efficient, which would have the effect of saving money while keeping people in there home of more than 4 decades.

Sincerely,

George E Zollner
160 Sunflower DR
Highland, IL 62249

April 13, 2012

Dear CGFA Members

My older sister's home is Murray Center. She moved there in 1979. She moved to a Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) in 1984, where staff turnover was very high and there was an abuse allegation and she suffered a broken wrist. She returned to Murray Center in 1987. In 2002 she moved to another community agency and returned to Murray Center 9 months later. I can tell you without a shadow of a doubt that she had the very very best care and the best opportunity for success at the second community agency. I can say this because I have been employed there since 2000. I loved being able to see my sister everyday. I know the staff gave her great care because I was there it see the care for myself. Sadly, she became very aggressive, she was pinching, pulling hair and biting to the point of drawing blood from staff and others living there. She was admitted to a psychiatric hospital

twice, placed on psychotropic medications and medications to address the side effects of the psychotropics. My sister's case was taken to CART, a clinical review team, who evaluated her history, behaviors and medications. They believe this behavior was her communicating she was unhappy and needed to go home. She returned to Murray Center days later. She was slowly weaned off psychotropics and has not needed any psychotropic medication to control her behavior for over 8 years. She still has occasional moments of communicating her displeasure with things by pinching, but she is not terrorizing her housemates. I was very sad to see her move, I now see my sister every other weekend for a couple of hours rather than daily.

I believe Governor Quinn has good intentions wanting to give people smaller new homes in nice community subdivisions, but it is not what is best for everyone. I know the Governor must make choices based on what is best for the masses and not necessarily the individual, but closing Murray Center is a bad decision for the individual and the masses. I learned this the hard way, I had a plan for my sister, one that I thought would bring us closer, make us both happy and save me money driving to Murray Center. The truth is my plan for her did more harm than good. She knew what she wanted and she wanted Murray Center, it is her home. Financially speaking it will cost more to care for her in the community, because she will more than likely need psychotropic medications again, psychiatrist visits, which include a staff person transporting her, gas and mileage. Her staffing need will increase and her case manager will be asking for increases in her daily rate to cover an increase in staffing hours because of her behaviors and I am terrified it will include future psychiatric hospitalizations.

I work in a community based program, when behaviors get severe, we have no choice but to call the police and an ambulance. We have a very hard time finding psychiatrists and hospitals who will care for or admit a person with an IQ less than 70, mild mental retardation. Hospitals are scared, they do not know how to keep a person with special needs safe intermingled with other people with psychiatric problems when none of the them are making good choices or understanding right from wrong. In my professional capacity I have been mildly successful in obtaining psychiatric services for people at hospitals in St. Louis, Missouri. By the way Missouri hospitals do not accept Illinois Medicaid, they accept Medicare, and most of the people living at Murray Center only have Medicaid.

In the community based programs the direct support staff make minimum wage, which is \$8.25 an hour. The minimum training they receive is 40 hours of classroom time and 80 hours of on the job training. They spend 3 hours of classroom training and 5 hours of on the job training on abuse and neglect. The woman who serves my quarter pounder with cheese with no onion extra value meal with a Dr. Pepper makes \$8.25 an hour. I would prefer that the person who showers my sister, cooks her food, cares for her, monitors her medical condition and keeps her safe all day and all night make more than the woman who serves my hamburger. My sister is more valuable than my hamburger.

Lastly, I have a few questions for the Governor. Does the Governor know that outside of Murray Center it is very difficult to find a doctors, including psychiatrist who will accept a patient with mental retardation and medicaid? Does the Governor know there are many things that could be done to help him balance the budget that does not include Murray Center? (I am sure many people criticize but do

not offer real suggestions, so I suggest we start by disallowing food stamps to be used at gas stations to purchase fountain sodas and hot dogs). Does the Governor have any idea where all these houses are that will house the 275 people living at Murray Center? Does the Governor have a plan to improve the monitoring and safety and well being of the people from Murray Center that will be flooding the community facilities? Does the Governor know that he has been quoted by newspapers as saying that the closure of Murray Center is not about money? If this is true why is the closure part of the proposed budget and not just a long term plan or initiative from the Department of Human Services to downsize or close state operated facilities in the State of Illinois? I believe we can make steps towards balancing the budget and keep Murray Center open.

Rita Hicks

I am writing in opposition to the closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL. My son has lived in this facility for the past 20 years. It was not our first choice. It was our last resort, as others have stated. Gary came to live at Murray Center after he was discharged from a private group home with no where to go. I had to leave my job and bring him home. He was denied residence at every group home in Illinois. His behavior problem was of the nature that every facility refused to even try and deal with it. I visited Murray Center and with much fear and trepidation my son was sent there to live. Murray Center earned my trust and respect! It is Gary's home and he does not understand why he is being evicted. Neither do I, his court appointed Guardian, who thought I got to make those decisions for Gary! A judge said I was the best one to do that!

At Murray behaviors are dealt with in the home. In the community the Police are called if the person does not calm down. I know of one instance where a client was tasered! This is what you call inhumane and archaic and should never ever be allowed to happen to my loved one who is severely impaired due to no fault of his own! I have a friend (actually more than 1) who operates a CILA and she confirmed this is what happens. With my son's medical problems, this could easily mean death for him! Unacceptable! Governor Quinn and members of COGFA, would you accept this for your child? Reminds me of the old days when shock was used as a deterrent to aggressive behaviors. And you say Murray is outdated and a dinosaur? As a R.N. in Psychiatry I have witnessed clients admitted for behaviors and the home where they came from has refused to take them back just as it happened with my son.

At Murray there is a nurse on the unit 24/7. There is emergency equipment like AED's, oxygen etc. For the past 2 years in a row my son has needed these services until he could get to a hospital after he dropped his heart rate and respiratory rate to dangerously low levels. My friend told me she has no AED in many of the homes! This is a life saving piece of equipment and she is considering a fund raiser to purchase one! That matter alone negates that the State is prepared to move medically fragile individuals into the community!

Staffing is one exceedingly scary problem! In many of the CILA's and group homes (especially at night) there is 1 staff person! Again unacceptable. People do fall ill, faint and even die or become victims of a crime or have to confront a severely impaired individual who is acting out due to circumstances even he may not understand. I have seen staff members blinded by clients and others knocked unconscious and

suffer a concussion. Who will look after my son if one of these situations were to occur? It is almost a guarantee that when you move my son from his home of 20 years that he is going to have an escalation of behaviors that for the most part are under control! My friends have also told me that they are very reluctant and not really wanting to accept anymore clients with behavior problems than what they already have! Again, talk is cheap but I question the preparedness that Gov. Quinn seems to guarantee that we have.

At Murray Gary has made many friends. He had none when he arrived from community. How would you like to leave your friends who are your family since being together for so long? Making friends is tough for our loved ones!

Activities are abundant at Murray and Gary thrives on them! How much participation will he have in the community?

Gary is a member of the Centralia community! It is said by advocates for closing SODC's that he is isolated! This could not be further from the truth! He is out in the community to shows, stores, recreation centers, bowling alleys restaurants and others too numerous to list! When I take him out with me, he is always approached by people in the community who come up to him to chat and ask how he is doing! He is treated with respect and seems to be well liked! I do not want him to lose that! Centralia has accepted our loved ones as their own and as their citizens! He is not treated like this in other communities because they are not used to our severely impaired sons and daughters who sometimes drool or eat messily because they can't help it. They are more often ignored or worse, made fun of. Yes, I would love to see community acceptance but it is coming at a slow pace and at what cost?

I fear this may be too lengthy and I have so much more to say! Please Cogfa encourage Gov. Quinn to reconsider not only the Murray closure but JDC as well. I truly believe the community is not properly prepared as I have tried to show in my few short sentences! Gov. Quinn, why won't you meet with even 1 parent /guardian affected by your decision? My son has several times asked me if he could talk to "that guy" about keeping his home. The guy he is referring to is you, Gov. Quinn! How about it? I have sent you a formal request so you have my contact information. I will await your call!

I apologize for not being able to organize my thoughts to put them all on paper but my mind is racing with the impact this issue is having on my son and others. I hope I have at least given supporters some food for thought and problems that need further scrutiny before these steps are taken to close these homes!

I haven't even touched on the economic issue to the Centralia community and the loss of over 500 jobs! 40 of those are Veterans whom you have said need jobs, I believe. Many folks will be forced to leave the community they also call home!

Thank you for allowing me this space to voice my sincere concerns! If my son whom I love with all my heart, were able to live at home or more independently and closer to me, DON'T YOU THINK HE WOULD BE?

Very Sincerely,
Barb Allen

OPPOSITION TO CLOSURE OF MURRAY DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

I am strongly opposed to the proposed closure of Murray Developmental Center. The level of care that Murray Center provides is an important component of the continuum of care needed for providing quality services to our disabled in this State. That continuum runs from the highly specialized care of the medically fragile and those with severe behavior problems and/or dual diagnoses to the individuals who are ready for and choose to live in the community.

About community placement: everyone who works in this field can tell you about the horrors of failed community placements. I want to tell you about the successes.

The first success story is about a young man who grew up poor on the streets in a small hometown where everybody knew him and looked after him. His mother was a substance abuser and his father was not usually in the picture. As he became older he was taken advantage of by those more clever at that sort of thing than he was. They took his money, physically abused him, used him for work and paid him with cigarettes, beer and marijuana. After a time they also used him to transport drugs. He was often intoxicated, on the streets late at night in a hard town and got into trouble with the local businesses. After many arrests and several months in jail (he had the mental age of a 7 year old!) he was ordered by a kind judge into the care of the Department of Human Services and came to Murray Center. His medication was adjusted and he was encouraged to take it. He had a nutritious diet and of course, no alcohol or drugs. He had a behavior program and received active treatment. He was a very proud employee and high wage earner at the community workshop. After two years of hard work and struggle on his part and the staff's he was discharged to a local group home. He has been there now for 1 ½ years. He is happy to be there and they are happy with him. He is healthy and safe. This is a success story that would not have happened if he had been forced out of care before he was ready. Just think of what could have happened to him. Drugs? Abuse? Jail? Death?

Another is a young lady who lived at home until she became an adult and went to live in a group home. She was often physically aggressive and had a series of admissions to psychiatric units. She was eventually admitted to a state operated facility, not Murray Center. While there she attempted to set a fire and was judged to be unfit to stand trial which was later changed to not guilty by reason of insanity. She was admitted to a forensic unit at the age of 24 and stayed 13 years until it was determined by her Team that she was ready for a less restrictive level of care at which time she came to Murray Center. When she arrived she was wearing ankle and wrist shackles. Picture that. A 104 pound disabled woman in shackles. Again her medication was adjusted, she had a behavior program and received active treatment. She also was a proud employee of the local workshop. After 2 years of treatment it was determined by her Team that she was ready for community placement. That was 2 years ago and she is still there. That is a success story.

One more. He is a man who was in a group home and became violent. They sent him to the hospital and refused to take him back. He came to Murray Center after a minimum of 23 admissions to state operated psychiatric hospitals (4 of them in forensic units), untold numbers of private hospitalizations and group home placements too numerous to count. At Murray he also received medication adjustment, a behavior program and active treatment. He also was a proud employee of the vocational workshop. After 3 years of treatment at Murray Center he, too, was discharged to the community. That was 1 ½ years ago. He loves it there and they love him. They have had no problems with him and say they would love to have a dozen like him.

All three of these individuals were at great risk of one kind or another in the community before they were allowed admission to Murray Center where they received the appropriate care to meet their individual needs. They returned to the community following a process of rehabilitative treatment. When there is a well-structured process in place and it is followed accordingly movement of an individual from a state operated facility to some level of community care can be successfully achieved by many individuals. It is the goal of all SODCs to direct our efforts toward helping the individuals we serve to maximize their potential in order to achieve this. However, it cannot be forced and it cannot be rushed by a timeline set in place by those who have other priorities.

Please use the hearing and your recommendations as an opportunity to be supportive of individuals such as those described above. They and those with other critical needs require and deserve access to the kind of care that Murray Center provides.

Carla Bauer

I am writing in response to the proposed closure of Murray Center. I am vehemently opposed to the closure for several reasons. I am a Program Director at Kaskaskia Workshop, a vocational workshop where many Murray Center residents as well as community clients and residents of ICF/DD's attend day training. Our clients look forward to coming to work daily and have a sense of pride and accomplishment from earning a paycheck. Those clients who are not capable of doing paid work benefit from activities provided as well as the invaluable friendships they have made from attending workshop. I am also a supervisor for two CILA's in Centralia. The proposal to move Murray residents into smaller facilities or CILA's may work for a handful of residents, but for many this would not be a proper fit. Several Murray residents have serious medical issues as well as behaviors that could not be accommodated if they lived in a CILA due to the limited staffing of that type of facility. The closure would have a devastating affect on the economy not only in Centralia, but in surrounding cities. There has to be another way to save our state money besides crushing an already financially jeopardized small town. Please reconsider this closure--SAVE MURRAY CENTER.

Melissa Knolhoff

Developmental Training II Program Director, Kaskaskia Workshop

To the Governor's Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

History shows that a society is judged by how it cares for its most vulnerable and disenfranchised. As a pastor and an economic realist, I am aware that Illinois has a massive conundrum to solve: how to regain financial viability while providing well for its citizens. However, the citizens at Murray Center in Centralia aren't your average citizens, and are far less able to deal with such life disruptions than other more able-bodied Illinoisans.

My congregation has one young woman residing at the Murray Center facility that has made significant progress in her emotional development in the five years that she has been there. When I visit, it is clear that Murray Center is not an "institution" -- rather, it is a community of qualified and caring staff who connect personally with their patients and care deeply about their welfare. Closing Murray Center isn't just a financial decision; it is the decimation of a community that has formed to help those far less able to help themselves.

My parsonage is located across the street from a Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA), which well serves the clients that reside there -- two of which are also congregation members. But the CILA could in no way have propelled the healing development of our young female parishioner as Murray Center has: the CILA simply does not have the staffing nor the training to provide such healing. Moving residents from Murray Center to a CILA is not a responsible choice for many, and perhaps, for the majority of Murray Center residents.

Additionally, Centralia is a town that has already lost a significant number of jobs due to other facility closures, including state closures. The loss of yet another 550 jobs would place Centralia in a precarious economic position.

Yes, I agree that the state needs to find a way to re-mediate budget shortfalls, but closing Murray Center, and placing the burden on the backs of some of our state's most vulnerable, is clearly not the ethical or moral way.

Rev. Sue Artt, Pastor
St. Paul United Church of Christ
Nashville, Illinois

Dear Governor Quinn,

Warren G. Murray Developmental Center is HOME to 280 individuals. Your plan to close this center will deal a tragic blow to these individuals, their families, and the entire Centralia area. At this time the Department of Human Services (DHS) has no plan in place as to where these individuals will be moved. Many residents at Murray Center have severe developmental disabilities, complex health needs and challenging behaviors. Your plan to move these residents to community based group homes is incomprehensible. Many of these residents have attempted to live in a community setting and were moved back to Murray Center because the community agencies were unable to meet the unique and challenging health needs or behavioral issues many of these residents face.

You are attempting to force these residents from their home, and a home that many of them have lived in for over forty years. They are part of the Centralia community, where they shop, eat at restaurants, go to sporting events, church services, and participate in all aspects of community life. Do not take away their home in your effort to balance the budget. Your position is that these community based homes will be less costly, but these community based homes are under no obligation to accept any resident, and at this time many are refusing to admit residents from Murray due to their complicated needs. **Where will our loved ones go?**

The residents are safe, happy, and well cared for at Murray Center. They are among staff who not only care for them but love them, and treat them as part of their family. We fear that this ill-advised closure of Murray Center may cause a repeat of the tragedy that ensued in the wake of the closure of Lincoln Developmental Center when 26 of its former residents died after being forced to move to less suitable settings.

The closure of Murray Center will be yet another loss for an economically struggling region. More than 600 good jobs will be lost to the Centralia area, where unemployment is already at 11.5%. Many dedicated and skilled employees who are devoted to the individuals they serve will be forced into the ranks of the unemployed.

Governor Quinn.....use common sense and moral righteousness and keep Murray Center open and funded! It is **home** to 280 individuals, and we demand you honor their right to live where they are happy and safe.

KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN AND FUNDED!

Bernard Winkeler

Parents and guardians are the best judge of what their loved ones need. Why does Governor Quinn think he knows more than we do as to what is right for our loved ones? Why would any responsible, loving, caring parent move their child from their home where they are well cared for and happy, into a community system that has failed so many in the past...what has changed in the state that would lead us to believe things will be different.....it would be morally wrong for us to risk our loved ones' lives because of some "grand social experiment" that has failed so many.

Rita Winkeler, President, Murray Parents' Association

I am sending this email in regards to the closure of the Murray Center. My name is Jessica Metcalfe and I am a patient's sister/guardian. The patient is Michael Metcalfe and he beyond loves his home at the Murray Center! I live in Colorado and the rest of his brothers and sisters in Georgia. Many people would question if we loved him so much and was concerned about him why wouldn't we move him closer. Well let me explain when I was 18 we took Michael to Georgia to see how he would do. Our plan was for two weeks and maybe not even bring him back to Illinois just apply to get everything transferred to Georgia. Well long story short Michael became so homesick that he refused to eat, sleep, do anything at all after the first 3 days. He had to be taken home to what we realized at this point was home to him and not with us. His family was the staff and patients of the Murray Center as much as we loved him and wanted to make up for lost time we had to choose what was best for Michael. His parents are not the best and when they moved me and my brothers and sisters to Georgia it was not until after all of us turned 18 many years later that we could go on road trips and see Michael because my parents and his parents moved to Georgia seemingly never looking back at Illinois. Yet his brothers and sisters missed him and were excited to take off and see him but he no longer really knew us, but we are now strangers to him seeing him once or twice a year was not enough. Michael would not even allow me to take him off campus to get his picture taken professionally last time I was there he jumped over the seat in my truck wanting to go back inside where he felt safe and secure. It almost broke my heart. I cried and cried but then I realized I should be happy that he is happy at the Murray center and feels safe and secure. Michael does have heart issues and this would beyond break his heart if this center closed. From the bottom of my heart I am asking and begging that you reconsider the decision to close Murray center not just for Michael but for everyone there, You see Michael was abused by his parents and taken from them when he was young and seeing how someone of his disability feels safe and secure after all he has been through is so important and he is far from being the only one there who has been abused and prefers no other place to call home than the Murray center! Please Please look out for these don't take a chance on letting them relive abuse and neglect that happens in group homes every day!!! Thanks for taking a moment to read.

Sincerely,
Jessica Metcalfe

I am sending this email in regards to the closure of the Murray Center. My name is Jessica Metcalfe and I am a patients sister/guardian. The patient is Michael Metcalfe and he beyond loves his home at the Murray Center! I live in Colorado and the rest of his brothers and sisters in Georgia. Many people would question if we loved him so much and was concerned about him why wouldn't we move him closer. Well let me explain when I was 18 we took Michael to Georgia to see how he would do. Our plan was for two weeks and maybe not even bring him back to Illinois just apply to get everything transfered to Georgia. Well long story short Michael became so homesick that he refused to eat, sleep, do anything at all after the first 3 days. He had to be taken home to what we realized at this point was home to him and not with us. His family was the staff and patients of the Murray Center as much as we loved him and wanted to make up for lost time we had to choose what was best for Michael. His parents are not the best and when they moved me and my brothers and sisters to Georgia it was not until after all of us turned 18 many years later that we could go on road trips and see Michael because my parents and his parents moved to Georgia seemingly never looking back at Illinois. Yet his brothers and sisters missed him and were excited to take off and see him but he no longer really knew us, but we are now strangers to him seeing him once or twice a year was not enough. Michael would not even allow me to take him off campus to get his picture taken professionally last time I was there he jumped over the seat in my truck wanting to go back inside where he felt safe and secure. It almost broke my heart. I cried and cried but then I realized I should be happy that he is happy at the Murray center and feels safe and secure. Michael does have heart issues and this would beyond break his heart if this center closed. From the bottom of my heart I am asking and begging that you reconsider the decision to close Murray center not just for Michael but for everyone there, You see Michael was abused by his parents and taken from them when he was young and seeing how someone of his disability feels safe and secure after all he has been through is so important and he is far from being the only one there who has been abused and prefers no other place to call home than the Murray center! Please Please look out for these don't take a chance on letting them relive abuse and neglect that happens in group homes every day!!! Then there is the staff that that will be put out of work after all they have done for these patients for years. People who took care and loved these patients, gave up holidays with their families to care for ours, spent nights comforting these patients when they were not feeling good, or when they had nightmares reliving abuse and neglect, people who deserve better pay and not a pay loss. They looked out for and loved these patients now let us look out for them! Thanks for taking a moment to read.

Sincerely,

Jessica Metcalfe

I am sending this email in regards to the closure of the Murray Center. My name is Jessica Metcalfe and I am a patients sister/guardian. The patient is Michael Metcalfe and he beyond loves his home at the Murray Center! I live in Colorado and the rest of his brothers and sisters in Georgia. Many people would question if we loved him so much and was concerned about him why wouldn't we move him closer. Well let me explain when I was 18 we took Michael to Georgia to see how he would do. Our plan was for two weeks and maybe not even bring him back to Illinois just apply to get everything transfered to Georgia. Well long story short Michael became so homesick that he refused to eat, sleep, do anything at

all after the first 3 days. He had to be taken home to what we realized at this point was home to him and not with us. His family was the staff and patients of the Murray Center as much as we loved him and wanted to make up for lost time we had to choose what was best for Michael. His parents are not the best and when they moved me and my brothers and sisters to Georgia it was not until after all of us turned 18 many years later that we could go on road trips and see Michael because my parents and his parents moved to Georgia seemingly never looking back at Illinois. Yet his brothers and sisters missed him and were excited to take off and see him but he no longer really knew us, but we are now strangers to him seeing him once or twice a year was not enough. Michael would not even allow me to take him off campus to get his picture taken professionally last time I was there he jumped over the seat in my truck wanting to go back inside where he felt safe and secure. It almost broke my heart. I cried and cried but then I realized I should be happy that he is happy at the Murray center and feels safe and secure. Michael does have heart issues and this would beyond break his heart if this center closed. Michael was taken to the hospital in middle of night last Monday because the nurse and staff knew Michael and knew something was wrong because he was not acting like himself. Michael would not have gotten same care or concern in a group home. From the bottom of my heart I am asking and begging that you reconsider the decision to close Murray center not just for Michael but for everyone there, You see Michael was abused by his parents and taken from them when he was young and seeing how someone of his disability feels safe and secure after all he has been through is so important and he is far from being the only one there who has been abused and prefers no other place to call home than the Murray center! Please Please look out for these don't take a chance on letting them relive abuse and neglect that happens in group homes every day!!! Then there is the staff that that will be put out of work after all they have done for these patients for years. People who took care and loved these patients, gave up holidays with their families to care for ours, spent nights comforting these patients when they were not feeling good, or when they had nightmares reliving abuse and neglect, people who deserve better pay and not a pay loss. They looked out for and loved these patients now let us look out for them! Thanks for taking a moment to read my personal argument.

Sincerely,

Jessica Metcalfe

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in concern for the many, many people that may lose their home if you close The Murray Center. There are also hundreds of dedicated, loving people who work there that will lose their jobs!!!

My cousin has lived at The Murray Center for over 20 years. He is severely developmentally disabled and cannot function on his own. His parents cannot handle him in their home because his needs are so severe. What will happen to him if the facility is closed!!!??????

Has anyone from the government really taken the time to walk through The Murray Center????? Have they even taken time to see what kind of care these residents of The Murray Center need??? I believe

the answer to these questions is, NO. If they had they would realize that the people that live at The Murray Center NEED the kind of care they receive there so thrive and try and live a happy life!!!

Where is the empathy for those who are not as fortunate as they are??? I think the State of Illinois needs to take a good long look at the budget. I am sure they can come up with a better solution than taking homes from people!!!!

I am hoping that the government will do the RIGHT thing and let these people keep their home!!!!

Marla Baer
Highland, IL

Illinois Governor Pat Quinn

23 February 2012

Office of the Governor
207 State House
Springfield, IL 62706

Governor Quinn;

I am writing you, as I'm sure many others are, in regards to your plan to close the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia.

I hope that you have been poorly advised in this matter, and this is not simply an arbitrary swipe of your broad sword to slash budget costs without considering the consequences. From here, however, it's hard to determine which is the case.

I would strongly advise – no, DEMAND that you find a few hours in your schedule to actually visit the facility. There, you will find residents who have no alternative placement options. Many have been there their entire lives, and the halls of Murray Center are the only environment they've known- in fact, Murray Center is their entire world. They love it there, and they love the staff who have made their care and comfort more than just an occupation. Direct care staff at Murray provide a level of care that transcends the mere feeding and personal needs into the emotional and spiritual realm.

As an Investigator for the DHS Office of Inspector General for 5 years, I had the distinct honor and pleasure of holding an office at Murray and conducting investigations there. Murray was just one of several state-operated developmental centers, mental health centers, and scores of community-based facilities I was tasked to cover during my time with OIG. I can tell you with no hesitation that Murray Center is the most efficiently run, resident-beneficial facility in the southern half of the state. And,

having sat in numerous seminars and conferences with fellow investigators, I'm sure Murray Center has no equal anywhere in Illinois.

Governor, I also understand that due to the nature of the level of care Murray Center provides, the state receives federal funding to offset the operating expenses of the facility. Reportedly, these federal funds mean that Murray operates at a fiscal level of "profit", meaning Murray is perhaps the ONLY facility in the state that actually MAKES money for the State of Illinois. This consideration makes your decision to cease operations at Murray even more puzzling, and gives credence to the thought that you have not fully considered the situation.

Even more important than the money, however, is the impact of closure and movement of residents that such a decision will have on the residents themselves and their families. As I stated earlier, these residents are not candidates for community placement (with only a couple exceptions). Therefore, the vast majority of these folks will have to be relocated to other inpatient, state-operated facilities elsewhere in the state. Developmental and mental health facilities are geographically located throughout the state for logical reason; to best serve the populace by providing treatment and care for those who need it most, in locations easily accessible to their families and support systems. Therefore, we look to where these fine folks will be relocated- the nearest developmental center is Jacksonville... but it is slated to close, as well.

You must understand that the emotion and comfort of these individuals is extremely fragile- removing them from an environment they've known all their lives will most certainly cause undue and immeasurable harm to their treatment regimen, and the stress and psychological impact resulting from such a move could conceivably last several months for many of them. Such a cause-and-effect action by anyone other than your administration would bring discipline and censure to those responsible, and for good reason.

And now, after these transfers are complete, families from our area will have to travel several hours each way just to visit with their loved ones. These visits, Governor, are perhaps the most beneficial aspect of care and treatment for these residents. I'm sure you can imagine how important a visit from family or friend can be to those who are chronically institutionalized.

Back to the money issue, surely you don't think the state's financial obligation ends with community placement... these moves will no doubt increase the state's obligation to community-based agencies by several zeros. Given that Murray operates in the green as mentioned earlier, it is inconceivable that this decision is soundly based on fiscal interests. That leaves us to speculate on your true intent. Curious.

Governor, there is no doubt that Illinois is in dire straits fiscally. However, that is of no fault of these individuals you've targeted. You cannot convince me that there are no other areas in which to make cuts or save money. That, sir, is absolutely ludicrous. Care and treatment of our most vulnerable is the absolutely LAST area to cut, and only when there is no money left to support and care for them. It's

ironic that you and those with similar philosophies consider doing so, yet espouse the critical need for universal, government-provided health care for all.... That, sir, makes not an iota of sense.

How about eliminating many of those unnecessary positions you created in other departments, clearly actions to appease your supporters and cronies? Seems they should be the first to feel the axe in a responsible, credible administration.

To us here in the southern part of the state, it is clear that your budget plans are more indicative of plans for your own political longevity, to ensure continued support for your political aspirations from those in the more populous north. I'd ask you to consider the very real and negative impact of what you are doing to thousands of others, to the imaginary and possible benefit of only one- you. I find this not only unacceptable, but appalling and downright disgusting.

Again, I am not bringing to issue the impact of such closure to the community; to retail, real estate, tax bases, schools, etc., but only pointing out the drastic impact on those served and their families. Surely you must possess enough human compassion to realize that this proposal has no basis in logic, common sense, compassion, responsibility, due care, fiscal reason, or your oath of office. There are no other possibilities left, other than your own personal, selfish, political reasons. That, sir, is an egregious, gross dereliction of your responsibility as Governor of this once-great state.

Therefore, I appeal to your sense of logic and compassion, and hope you can somehow understand that closing Murray Center not only would be fiscally damaging to the state and to thousands of her citizens, but drastically counter-therapeutic to the residents who are served by Murray Center.

I would also recommend you reconsider the qualities and character of those who have so ineffectively advised you in this matter.

Mr. Governor, you **MUST** reconsider closing Murray Center and similar facilities. Cuts must be made, but not there. If you need help identifying those areas or programs we could easily live without, give me a call. I'd be glad to send you a list. I think the view from here must be much clearer than from your perspective in the north. Visit the "618" and let us show you around. Just because you can't see it from where you are doesn't mean there aren't human beings with real needs and critical issues down here.

Sincerely,

Troy D. Cannon
Salem

Dear Sirs/Madams:

My name is Dr David Fell. I am the owner of Quad Counties Veterinary Clinic, a business in the community of Centralia, Illinois for the last 31 years. I am writing this letter to urge you to keep Warren G Murray Developmental Center open.

I graduated in 1979 and moved to Centralia to open my own private veterinary practice basically for two reasons- employment at Murray Center and the location of the Centralia Animal Diagnostic Laboratory.

I have earned my living from the business of taking care of pets in and around the city of Centralia and livestock on the surrounding farms of Marion, Clinton, Washington and Jefferson Counties- hence the derivation of the name of my practice. Many of the employees of Murray Center are my clients who bring their animals to me.

As a small business professional I realize that steady employment opportunities for the people of this community are important for my practice to exist and grow. I have employees as well that rely on my practice flourishing for their jobs as I am sure many other business here do.

The closure of Murray Center would have a devastating effect on this city and the surrounding communities.

Please consider keeping this wonderful facility open for the benefits of its residents and also for the benefit of the many small businesses that keep this economy going and provide tax dollars so the State of Illinois may continue to operate. Small business is the engine that funds this facility. The people of Southern Illinois deserve no less consideration when it comes to potential closures. Other ways must be found for Illinois to dig out from under its burgeoning debt.

Respectfully yours, David Fell DVM

On behalf of the residents, family members of residents and employees of the Murray Development Center, I would implore with you to not close the facility. This facility is a "home" to its residents. The facility and its employees provide the care and support to its residents that each desperately requires. The family members of these developmentally disabled adults rely on this facility to provide tremendous care and support to their family members on a daily basis. The Murray Center provides services that family members would not otherwise be able to offer to their loved ones. The closure of the Murray Center would be an unnecessary hardship on the residents, family members, employees and the City of Centralia. I respectfully request that closure of the Murray Center is reconsidered.

Kimberly Kuhlengel-Jones, Attorney at Law.

To: All legislative members

RE: Closing of Murray Developmental Center, Centralia, IL

My name is Jennifer Heidrick and I am writing in regard to the Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability (COGFA) hearing this Friday, April 20, at Centralia. I am opposed to the closing of Murray Developmental Center. It needs to stay open for the health, safety, and quality of life for our loved ones. My great uncle RoyLee White has called this place home for the past 10 years. It has been a wonderful facility-its employees genuinely care about their residents and I feel they provide my uncle with a safe and secure environment to live in. He has severe developmental disabilities and requires complex health care that Murray Center is able to provide. If you do not oppose this closing, Governor Quinn's Administration will force him as well as other residents to move to different facilities and leave families with no choice in what happens. With what my uncle requires in care, there is nowhere for us to turn! He cannot survive in a small group home. Closing this center would be devastating for us. Ten years ago, Illinois shut down other facilities including Lincoln Developmental Center where my uncle RoyLee lived for many years. The move was not only stressful for him but also for my family, especially my grandmother who is his guardian. When Lincoln closed, 26 of its former members did not survive the move – some were forced into less suitable settings for their needs. Please do not let this happen to our family. Times are hard enough as it is. Not only will the closing of this facility affect our family, it will also affect those that work there and their families. With high gas prices, increasing unemployment, and other hardships, putting these workers out of jobs and displacing their families will not be a step in the right direction. They are dedicated to caring for these individuals. Illinois officials such as yourself need to think of all the negative effects your decision can make and the repercussions it will cause if you vote the wrong way. Please make a positive decision-the right decision-to keep Centralia open for its 280 residents and over 600 individuals who work there. Please do not write these people off! They are loved and needed just as much as any other. Put yourself in the shoes of these residents, workers, and families – would you like to be in my shoes? Please keep Murray Center open and preserve what Centralia has left to offer. The state of Illinois needs this haven for those who need the vital support Murray Center provides. Thank you.

Jennifer Heidrick
16368 E. 2650 N. Rd.
Danville, IL 61834

We support the closure of Murray and will help with community needs as we can. Thanks You, Carm

Carm Herman
Executive Director
Barbara Olson Center of Hope

To The Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability:

My name is Thomas W. Hawkins. I am a resident of Centralia and a retired educator. I am writing in regard to the proposed closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. Please know that I am very opposed to the closure of this facility. The services which Murray Center provides to its residents are very necessary and extremely unique. The facility has been the only home that many of the individuals who live there have ever known. If Murray is closed, these fragile persons will be required to live in facilities which have yet to be identified. It is my concern that these facilities yet to be identified will be unable or unwilling to provide the level of services needed by these individuals and which are currently being provided by Murray Center. In fact, I know of no other facility with the capacity, capability and care of Murray Center to provide for this special needs population.

Additionally, it is my opinion that the closure of Murray Center will have a negative impact at both the local and state levels. Obviously, the immediate impact of the closure will be felt in the form of lost jobs and reduced revenue to the local and regional economy. I believe, however, there will also be a profound economic down side at the state level in the form of increased unemployment benefit expenses, reduced sales and income tax revenue and additional financial expense for the care and welfare of displaced Murray residents.

Thank you for allowing me to express my thoughts on this important matter. I do request that my communication be included in the public record of comment concerning the proposed closure of the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. It is my fervent hope that Murray Center will remain open and operational to serve the citizens of Illinois for many years to come.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or desire additional comment or information. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Hawkins,
Resident of Centralia and Retired Educator
1871 Moonglow Road
Centralia, IL 62801

Murray Center should NOT be closed down as it provides a home and care for those who otherwise would not receive the assistance they need. Without this assistance these people would have a lower quality of life. Also the Murray Center provides many people in the area with employment.

Thank-you
Concerned Citizen
Leah Goodwin

I have worked at Murray Center for 28 years as a Registered Nurse. I have worked with many of the same individuals over that period of time. Many of the individuals that live at Murray Center have been there for many years. This is not a state operated facility to them, it is their home. I have seen many individuals placed in other facilities There have been many deaths of individuals after their placement at these "less restrictive environments". We at Murray Center care for the individuals that live there as they are our family. We care for them, celebrate their birthdays, and encourage them to achieve their goals. Many do not understand what is going on and why they may lose their home and their friends. Our individuals have special needs. Some have challenging behavior issues and others are medically involved. They require medications, treatments, frequent change of position, and many require tube feedings per a feeding tube. The number of skin breakdown issues at Murray Center is very low due to nutrition and positioning. It would be a great disservice to these people who cannot speak and care for themselves. Please help keep Murray Center open.

Thank you,

Teena Sanders

To: Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability

Re: Opposing closure of Murray Center, Centralia, IL.

Written testimony

From: Donna Perchez, Educator/Q.S.P.

33 year employee of Murray Developmental Center

Note: "Sam's" name was changed to protect his privacy.

"It Feels Like '91"

I would like to introduce you to my friend "Sam". In 1991 "Sam" came to Murray Center from a private facility in Carbondale during its closure by the Department of Public Health.

"Sam" was born in 1964. I always tell him it was a very good year, but it wasn't for his family. You see, "Sam" did not receive enough oxygen when he was born and as a result he has severe spastic quadriplegia. Even though "Sam" has a normal mind and a working understanding of the world around, he has no functional use of his body with the exception of turning his head from side to side. He has severe respiratory difficulty and is homebound during extremes in temperature.

When "Sam" was a young boy, he would look up on a high shelf where his mother kept cookies. His mother realized he was looking up at the cookies when he wanted one and eventually he generalized the act of looking up as the sign for "yes" in all aspects of his life. Looking to the side became "no."

When "Sam" came to Murray Center at twenty six years old his only means of communication was to look up for "yes" and to the side for "no." He had a wheelchair that he just used to get from one

point to another because of his inability to tolerate it for long periods of time. He utilized a recliner when on the unit.

"Sam" was assessed for a new wheelchair and one was fabricated in a short time. Since that time he has had three other wheelchairs that have provided more and more comfort. An attempt was even made to provide him with an electric chair however he could not coordinate motor movements to steer it.

In the area of communication, "Sam" was provided with an initial communication device, an Intro Talker, that accommodated 32 words. We quickly found out that "Sam" could not only communicate "yes" and "no," but that he could understand complex ideas and reason. The door to his ability to learn had been blown wide open. He progressed through the Alpha Talker, the Light Talker, the Delta Talker, and is currently working with the Vanguard communication device. The Vanguard has a capacity to communicate 3000 words. Quite a step up from "yes" and "no."

The increase in communications skills has allowed him to communicate his numerous medical and physical needs including his frequent need for breathing treatments, suctioning and/or medications. Imagine having difficulty drawing a breath, not being able to move and being unable to tell someone you needed Albuterol.

He eventually communicated that he would like to learn to read and the Speech/Language Pathologist obtained an introductory phonics program called "Simon Sounds-It-Out I" and the sequel "Simon SIO II" which were adapted for his switch. "Sam" progressed in his reading skills using Start-to-Finish Books, and has read many of the classics including: Diary of Anne Frank, Tuskegee Airmen, Frankenstein, A Christmas Carol, Little Women, Call of the Wild, Tom Sawyer, and Huckleberry Finn, to name a few. Along with the Start-to-Finish Books, "Sam" has staff read to him 3 other books every day. He reads the Bible, a devotional, and fiction or inspirational. When he is finished with one book he will ask for another.

"Sam" understands abstract ideas as demonstrated by his continued spiritual growth, religious faith, and attempts at introspection. He communicated in 2005 that he wanted to be baptized. "Sam" was baptized at a local church. Every year he obtains a new devotional and has been reading them for the last 5 years. His spiritual growth and emotional maturity is evident in his ability to cope and work through the daily stresses in his life. "Sam" is the most honest person I know.

"Sam" can spell phonetically if he is unable to find a word on his communication device. He has a wide range of interests and understands both simple and complex topics. He has reasoning skills and seems to enjoy discussing and learning about new concepts. He also stays informed of current events and politics through his voracious appetite for the news. He watches the news three times each day and likes to discuss stories that interest him. "Sam" is a registered voter and prefers to go to the poles rather than vote absentee.

"Sam" receives speech therapy 4-5 times per week for 30 minutes. At this rate, if he were in a CILA, he would no longer receive services after March 16th of a calendar year. Even with a waiver he would be ineligible to receive Speech/Language services after May 28th of a calendar year. Periodically he needs assistance with his device requiring technical work which takes extra time. It would be unfortunate to have to wait weeks or months to get his device repaired or to acquire upgrade or needed customization. How disheartening!

In the same way, his Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Services would be limited. Along with routine range of motion treatments, "Sam's" weekly whirlpools, which he dearly loves, would be severely cut.

"Sam" and his guardians have been asked if they wanted to look for an alternative placement just to see what was out there. They have continually declined, not wanting to leave Murray Center where he is so secure and has made so much progress.

Recently "Sam" said to me, "It feels like '91." At first I didn't know what he was talking about and then it hit me like a load of bricks. I asked him if that was when his skilled nursing facility closed and he looked up for "yes."

Donna Perchez, Educator/Q.S.P.

33 year employee of Murray Developmental Center

Dear Commission

I'm writing you about the Murray Center closure. I've worked there since 1992. You really need to think about this and not close the facility. There is a lot of special people that live at this facility. They would not get the same care at group homes there is not enough staff to handle the behaviors that we deal with at Murray Center. And they have the ability to go in the community and do different things like shopping baseball games bowling movies and many other things. plus the impact on the community from the loss of jobs would make this a ghost town and a lot of business would not make it if Murray Closes

Tina Miller

To Cogfa Committee Members,

My name is Kathy Cripps and I would like to submit this written statement. I am aunt and guardian of a Murray Center resident, that means that Murray Center is her home!! It has been her HOME for the past 24 years!

I am totally opposed to the closure of Murray Center!!!!!!!!!!

These forever children need the continuous care, love, medical attention and acceptance that they receive from the staff at Murray Center. Let me just stop here and tell you about some of the staff.....quality staff who care and love the residents.....they go above and beyond consistently providing basic human needs!!!

When options have been discussed as for placement of our loved ones, there has been nothing mentioned that is close in location and for these forever children that will be detrimental to their health and mental peace....you see the staff and the other residents have become part of their family. So if Murrays Center was to close, they would lose their home and their family.....and that is JUST NOT RIGHT!!!! There is a story in the Bible where the children had gathered around Jesus and the disciples were sending the children away and Jesus stopped the disciples and told them to "suffer the little children to come unto me". Right there Jesus set an importance concerning children. I believe He still views children as important!!! I believe He still wants us to view children as important and that includes forever children!! In closing, please keep Murray Center open and fully funded!!

Sincerely,

Kathy Cripps, Aunt and Guardian of Tamara Richards, a forever child that calls Murray Center home

April 16, 2012

COMMISSION ON GOVERNMENT FORECASTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

ATTN: Facility Closure

703 Stratton Building

Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing this letter in opposition to the proposed closure of Murray Center. I have worked at Murray Center for 28 years. I have been a Program Coordinator/HPC/QSP during my years at Murray Center. I have dealt with admissions to Murray Center during my time, and the majority of them are still with us today as this is their "home".

I have been involved in the transition process for placement into community settings. I would like to say they have all been successful, but many have not. If the ones that were placed in community settings were not able to find the right "fit", they had the opportunity for placement back at Murray Center. This has not been the case over the last year.

Due to the closings of several other state facilities, Murray Center received placements from both Howe and Lincoln. One particular placement still bothers me. This individual had lived his/her entire life in the state system. Keeping that in mind, we wanted to give this individual the opportunity to experience a less restrictive placement, and a group home/CILA was found. After several pre-placements visits, this individual was discharged to his/her new home in the community. It became evident through self-injurious behavior, refusing to eat, depression and generally being withdrawn, that this individual was not adjusting to his/her "new home". Murray provided technical support through visits and numerous staffings with CILA staff to help with the transition to the new placement. The opportunity to return back to Murray was not an option. It was obvious that this individual was not happy with his/her new home and not receiving the services needed. Unfortunately, this individual passed away less than a year after being discharged into the CILA home. Community placement is not for everyone. Community providers do not have the staff training to deal with challenging behaviors. The staff turnover is high in the group homes, which can be detrimental to the success of a placement. Sadly, these individuals with behaviors are over-medicated, so staff can "manage" their behaviors.

The trend during the last several years at Murray has been 30-60 day admission from the community. This is time for Murray Center to adjust medications, stabilize their behaviors and then send them back out into the community. This sounds good, but in reality, it doesn't work like that. I can think of several placements that were only "temporary admissions," and guess what? Four (4) years later, and they are still here! The community placements could not deal with their behaviors. Many of our admissions have very complex behaviors, which cannot be cured overnight. They require a highly structured environment with intense behavior modification, frequent medication monitoring, and daily consistency in their lives. Their survival and success is dependent on those variables, and this is not always available

in the community setting. To the many individuals that live at Murray, this is "their home". They have lived here because their own natural support network or community setting could

Page 2

not deal with their special needs, either behaviorally or medically. Murray has been a safe haven for many when they were not able to find their "fit" in society.

So, on behalf of the individuals for whom I am an advocate, PLEASE do not continue to consider the closing of Murray Center. Many individuals' lives are at stake, and they deserve the same rights to choose where they live as you and I do.

Respectfully yours,

Julie Hester
406 Nevada Avenue
Sandoval, IL 62882

To Whom It May Concern:

Small communities across this nation has suffered greatly during this economic down turn. Centralia Illinois has suffered with a decrease in value of homes as much as 20 percent. If we loose Murray Center, the home values will take another decrease in value and cause major decrease in valuations of all real estate within a 20 to 30 mile radius, commercial and residential. Needless to say a decrease in my title insurance business as well as many other small business. Thereby further deceasing employment opportunities for both small and large businesses in that same area, in an area that already has 10 percent plus unemployment keeping the Murray Center open will help to stablize the employment future for the area.

Karen Piotrowski
President
Quad County Title Company Inc.
140 S Poplar
Centralia, IL 62801

Hello, my name is Victor L. Young and I have worked at the Warren G Murry Center for 13 years. I've been a Mental Health Technician, Dietary Aid, and I'm currently a Housekeeper. I believe we are more than just titles when you are employed with the Murary Center. I've also worked at a 4 and a 8 bed Cila, and a 16 bed group home in Alton. Working at the Murray Center has changed my life for the better as a person. Through working with residents with developmental disabilities has enriched my life in many ways. Murray fills a unique need for a specific population. The Murray Center has been partly my home for more than a decade. The service provided here compares to few places in the entire Tri-state area. The Murray Center shines in any area of care. The closure of the Murray Center would be devastating to all of Southern Illinois! I thank the COGFA representatives, and all the concerned community, and the family members involved.

Please Tell it 2 the Governor-----KEEP US OPEN

Victor Young

I ask the legislature to reconsider Gov. Quinn's request to close the Murray Center. The Center serves one of the least fortunate in our society and they should be protected and cared for by us. The private sector does not have the necessary skill or desire to do a good job caring for these individuals. They deserve some peace of mind and quality of life.

Sincerely,

Tim Marti
Concerned Citizen

Dear COGFA members,

I am writing you in support of the closure of the Murray Developmental Center.

As a parent and a sibling of a person with a developmental disability I implore you to have the courage to do the right thing and get Illinois out of the 19th Century by closing these warehouses.

My 12 year old brother died in one of these places and our family shudders to think that one day our 30 year old daughter will end up living with 200 others in an institution.

Have the courage to resist the unions and special, selfish interests and stand up for those who do not always have a voice.

Not only does the closure of these large warehouses make economic and fiscal sense, it is the right of people with disabilities to live productive lives as part of a community.

Before you decide this issue, ask yourself if you or a family member had a developmental disability, where would you want to live?

Fourteen other states have found the courage to eliminate the warehousing of PEOPLE with developmental disabilities. Please have the courage to do the right thing.

Best regards,
Brad and Willa Guidi
4/17/12

As a parent of a resident of Murray Center, I am asking that you allow Murray Center to remain open. My daughter, Dana VanMeter, has been a resident of Murray for 28 years. She is in the absolute best place for her. When Bowen Center was changed to a Juvenile Center under Governor Thompson, my daughter was moved to another facility, not of my choice, since I had no choice of where to place her, the outcome was almost deadly for her. My family & I are adamant in the face that Murray Center should remain open as a facility for Developmentally Disabled people. Murray Center is a wonderful home for our family member, the staff are well trained and compassionate. This is the home and family my daughter has known for 28 years. This move will absolutely not have a good outcome for my daughter. Family members & Staff at Murray know what is best for the residents. The Staff really care about the residents & it shows in the care they provide. I ask that you take a good look inside yourself and ask if you had a handicapped child, would you not want what is best for them? Would you want someone to come into you home and take your children out and place them with someone other than the care-taker you had chosen for them? This is what you are doing to our family member and parents. Please re-consider and keep Murray open. It is the most humane thing you can do for these residents and staff. Thank you for your consideration.

William & Mary Ann Brand

Dear COGFA Members:

By now you have heard many arguments on both sides of the issue of closing State Operated Developmental Centers. This is a very emotional issue. Your role is to look beyond some of the emotion and do what is in the best interests of people with developmental disabilities.

- Illinois is one of the last states to cling to an antiquated model of warehousing people with developmental disabilities in large institutions.
- There has been much national research documenting that people with developmental disabilities living in small community settings are happier, live longer and are more likely to work than people living in large institutions.
- Illinois does have the community-based infrastructure to properly support people with developmental disabilities.
- While keeping jobs in a community is important should we really be doing this at the expense and detriment of people with developmental disabilities?

Thank You

Dan Strick
SouthSTAR Services
1005 West End Avenue
Chicago Heights, IL 60411

I support the closing of Murray Developmental Center because individuals have the right to live in the community. I know you will hear a lot of testimony about how wonderful the services are and how devoted the staff. That may even, in some instances, be true. However, those services could be enhanced and improved if the individual lived in a setting of their choosing in or near family. There is no comparison between living with one, two or three other people and living in a congregate setting. There is no magic at Murray. It is still about having well trained staff providing services to people in a skilled and caring manner. There was so much concern on the part of people whose lives were changed when Lincoln Developmental Center closed. Those people have done well in the community and the economy of Lincoln has rebounded. There is a great deal of research that attests to the benefits of community vs.state operated facility care.

My personal experience with care in a Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) is with my sister, for whom I am guardian. She has lived in a CILA in Monticello, Illinois for many years and it has been the best living situation for her. The rebalancing will create a plan for each person that best meets their needs. Community services are not being paid now in a timely manner. The only way to provide what is needed is to stop utilizing the high cost state operated facilities and place people in the community where their needs will be met in a less expensive manner. Make no mistake, this will not enrich the coffers of other aspects of state government, rather the money must follow the individual into the community to provide the necessary services and the state must continue to provide oversight of the providers of service.

I understand that you will hear very emotional testimony from people whose jobs will be affected and from frightened parents and guardians but please try to look beyond the immediate turmoil to what is best for the individuals whose lives will be changed for the better as the rebalancing occurs.

Linda Shroyer

I support the closing of Murray Developmental Center. If I were no longer able to care for my daughter, I hope that she would be able to remain in her community in a much smaller setting.

Carol Sanderson

We support the closure of Murray. Put the money into building more support services in the communities of IL

Teri Steinberg
Chicago Regional Organizer
Illinois Association of Microboards & Cooperatives, Inc.

Tuesday, April 17, 2012

I support the closing of Murray Developmental Center.

Brian Rubin J.D.

We support the closing of Murray Developmental Center.

Dan & Cheryl Kinsinger
1109 Westminister Drive
Washington, IL 61571

Dear members of COGFA,

I am writing to implore you to recommend keeping Murray Center in Centralia, IL open.

My baby brother, Shawn, has lived there for the past 26 years, ever since he was 13 years old. This is his home and he is well taken care of.

Shawn needs 24/7 care and would never be able to take care of himself. He does not know danger. Would not be able to understand direction. And if he would wander away, he would not be able to tell anyone who he was or that he needed help.

When my parents made the decision of where Shawn should live, they researched and toured many other developmental centers and group homes. Murray Center is one of the best in the country!!!

They have a beautiful campus the residents can enjoy, and provides a nice enjoyable place for family and friends to visit their loved ones. They have daily activities and outings for the residents to enjoy. The people who work there know how to take care of the special needs of the residents.

I love my brother with all my heart and it would just break my heart for him to have to move.

It's hard on the residents to just have to move to another building within Murray Center. It would be devastating for them to have to move to a totally different place. Their worlds would be turned upside down. Many may not even survive such a move.

I'm begging you to please open your hearts on Friday when you tour the facility and speak with the families and employees. You will find that the residents are special, delicate, loved individuals who deserve special love, care, & protection. Please don't make them move out of that kind of environment.

SAVE MURRAY CENTER!!!!!!

Thank you for your consideration,

Suzanne Muehlher

Columbia, IL

I support closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. My son was in a state developmental center for several years. He is now in a CILA and his life is SO much better. He is much happier and is doing many more things for himself. While community may not be for every developmentally disabled person, it is best for most. We must provide the opportunity for all to be as integrated as possible in their community. It is unfortunate, but most opponents are scared. They fear the unknown. Others had a bad experience because of insufficient preparation and transition support.

Mary F Nordstrom

In spite of the many voicing dissent with the proposed closing of this facility, I continue to think the closing will be looked back on as the start of a New Day in the care of our most vulnerable loved ones. I recognize the fear of those who love these residents of Murray, but my desire for Murray to close is made with love as its basis also.

Byron G. Pinkston
901 Madison
Gillespie, IL 62033

Failure is to succeed at things that do not even count!

I am writing in support of the closure of Murray DC. While I regret the economic hardship to the area; however that is not what should be the factor that decides where people who have done no wrong should live. People with developmental disabilities should live like everyone else, in their own communities, close to family and friends. The closing of large state facilities has been delayed far too long in Illinois. It's time to do the right thing. I was told to institutionalize my son when he was born 42 years ago. He has more pervasive disabilities than most of those living at Murray and he has done very well living in the community. Please give these people a chance and close Murray DC.

Jacki Neil Boss

I urge you to move forward with the **closing** of Murray Developmental Center. **We support the closing of this center.**

thank you,

Christine Sevilla,
Illinois resident and mother of a child with developmental disabilities who will need community housing in the future

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I and my family support the closure of the Murray Developmental Center. The cost to maintain a person in a state operated facility is significantly more than having that person live in the community. Secondly, the outcomes for people living in the community is better than those living in a state facility.

Given the fiscal circumstances of The State of Illinois it would be wise to move toward closure of the Murray Developmental Center.

Thank you for your consideration,

Don, Barbara and Bill Henzlik

I support the closure of the Murray Developmental Center. Everyone has a right to live in the community with supports. It has been shown that with the proper supports, individuals with disabilities thrive and grow when they are part of their community. As a parent /advocate of a young adult with disabilities, I want my daughter to continue to live in her community, with supports and not have her placed in an institution . She herself has visited an ICFDD , visiting one of her friends who lives there and she came out of that experience voicing the following: "I never want to live here , in an institution." She was very upset at the visit, crying on the way home.

Thank you,
Anna-Marie Kissel

Statement to
The Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
Closure of Murray Development Center
April 16, 2012

My name is Judy O'Malley and I reside in Godfrey, Illinois. I support closure of Murray Center and transitioning the residents into community through person centered planning. I have Cerebral Palsy which significantly impacts major areas of my life. My father was adamant that I have a place of my own. When I was 23, I moved into Beverly Farms, a privately run institution at that time. In 1981, the state stepped in and made some changes. When that happened our freedoms were diminished. We no longer had many choices. Then I moved into a group home of 12 and we went everywhere. The problem with that was we had to go as a group. If I wanted to go shopping and movies were scheduled, I had to go to the movies. Now I live in my own apartment and have been there for 20 years this year. I love it. I serve on IMPACT CIL board of directors, volunteer 2 days a week at the Edwardsville Library and work out at the YMCA 2 days a week. As you can see my life is very full. Many people look at me and believe I should live in an institution. My opinion is everyone can and should be supported in the community. There is a way to do it as you can see from me.

Thank you,
Judy O'Malley

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing this letter in regard to the Warren G. Murray Development Center.

As a mother of three teenagers who have Developmental Disabilities, which include Down syndrome and Autism, I am asking you to go forward with the closing. It is time for Illinois to move forward and begin the process of closing down institutions and begin looking at Community Living Arrangements. As a mom of three I never dreamed of the day of placing my loved ones in institutions. It will not happen and should no longer be an option.

There is absolutely no reason for institutions to continue to stay open and house people with developmental or physical disabilities. Our most severe can live in the community with supports. I have, and will continue, to work towards my three having a place within the community. There should be more Group or CILA Homes. It will save the State of Illinois hundreds of thousands of dollars. Not only does it make sense financially for the State, but it is a more sensible, comfortable, and morally the correct thing for our loved ones.

I understand the concern for the residents that are currently living within the Murray Institution. The move should be slow and done with love and care for its current residents. Many will be much happier and more content to live within a community setting. The few that can not transition out of that type of setting should be placed to live out their years within another setting.

The time is now; the State of Illinois needs to move forward! We should no longer be placed at the bottom of the list of States when it comes to Community Living of people with Disabilities. We should be ashamed of our ranking of 49th or 50th.

Catherine Bedard
Ricky, Alexandra and Tiffany's Mom
3434 Lombard Avenue
Berwyn, IL 60402

Dear Mr. Varner and esteemed Commission Members:

I am the proud parent of a twenty-six year old with autism. He is living in a small group home in our community. He has a wonderful life that I would wish for all of the individuals who have intellectual and developmental disabilities in Illinois. Our state is far behind other states in providing community integrated housing arrangements for our citizens who have disabilities. We are spending an inordinate amount of money on a very small number of people, all of whom can and should be living among their non-disabled peers with the support they need to be successful, contributing, members of society.

I am strongly in favor of the closure of all SODC's in Illinois, including Murray Developmental Center, as soon as feasible, taking into account the individual needs of the current residents at Murray and the other state operated facilities.

Thank you.

Ellen Garber Bronfeld

Hello,

As a parent of a young adult with severe disabilities, I strongly agree with the closure of Murray DC. I am in full support of increasing community-based services for people with disabilities!!!!!!

Thank you,

Kelly Cain

My name is Jack Hayes, and I am the brother of Tom Hayes, who is a resident in a private ICF/DD. Though Tom is not a resident of a state institution, I am very aware of the need for a range of facilities to accommodate the needs of varying degrees of disability. Community placement is a good option, but it is not the best option for everyone.

Jack Hayes

Dear Commission

My daughter has lived at Murray Center since 1979, she has tried to live in the community twice. The first time she was part of an OIG investigation because she was severely injured and a staff person was terminated. I am very afraid of her losing her friends and family at Murray Center. You may think she will have a better life in the community but the truth is it will turn her world upside down, and it may never level back out. I heard what Director Casey had to say about how supports currently being provided at Murray Center will be continued in the community and that he is willing to put this in writing for any family or guardian who wants it. The problem with this for my daughter is that currently because of the consistent, long term, and anticipated behavior interventions she receives at Murray Center she has no behavior plan and she is on no medications for behavior. Over the past 33 years I have had to consent to Murray Centers well trained staff to physically restrain her to a bed and be placed in a time out room. No community agency has the training, staffing and ability to safely perform this task, and I would never approve it I only trust Murray Center. Even though my daughter has profound mental retardation she is very smart, observant and perceptive. In the other community

setting she tried she learned very fast they had no restraints and no reward program was enough to control her behaviors. She has been trained over the last 33 years what to expect, she had learned consequences, she has learned to control her own behavior. Wasn't this the plan? When she was 8 years old the professionals said they knew best and they could help, they were right. Please don't close Murray Center, it will feel like a punishment for myself, her and the staff at Murray. I know some of you are going to take a tour of Murray Center, you will probably see my daughter, she will be smiling from ear to ear and showing you her big brown eyes. That will be a good day and good days are not everyday, I need and she needs Murray Center for the bad days, they have been able to do what no one else can. Please do not shut Murray Center.

Sincerely

Althea Sharp Thomas

To: Committee on Governmental Forecasting and Accountability Members
Written Testimony

From: Melissa Cavitt CTRS
Supervisor of Activity Therapy/Volunteer Services
34 year employee

I am writing in regard to lack of community integration being cited as a reason to close Murray Center. As a certified therapeutic recreation specialist, I strongly advocate for people who are behaviorally or medically challenged to have their needs & desires met. At Murray we offer a continuum of service: therapy >leisure education>recreation participation. The goal is to meet each person's unique desire for a satisfying leisure lifestyle they can enjoy as independently as possible.

The continuum is likened to the 5 stages that CRA has developed in which the goal is for the individual to "own" or the community in which he/she lives "owns" the program.

The ultimate goal of recreational therapy is for the person to be in charge of their leisure choices and plan and carry out their activities and outings with as little support as necessary. Choices are provided to the person so that opportunities to learn and develop the necessary skills to meet this goal are *person centered*.

By sharing about a person that lives at Murray I can better illustrate my point:

We will call her "G". G came to live at Murray with many conflicts. She was self-abusive to the point of hurting herself and needed a helmet and arm/knee pads, she had been in several different living arrangements and had been seen by many "experts". Recreation therapy is just one of the therapies used to meet G's desire to live in a CILA or back home with her family. She had enjoyed many activities previously and some of these were gradually re-introduced into her routine. Music, reading, bike riding provided her enjoyment. She has used computers. As her behavior improved, outings were introduced. G did not wish to wear her helmet on many of these. She soon learned as she dealt with

her anxieties in an acceptable manner it allowed her to be involved in more activities and outings. Then as G participated in more recreation there were more opportunities to develop leisure skills such as appropriate etiquette, positive attitudes, use of money, time management etc. She gradually became able to visit restaurants of her choice and go shopping with staff support and swim at the local recreation center. Therapy and leisure education continue and as G's choices to recreate become more apparent, the activity therapy staff currently plan rec programs for G that allow her the most independence possible with the goal of her attending places in the community with no supports. Last fall she participated in a fashion show sponsored by Fashion Bug and Jim Ford's men's wear with support from the case coordination agency (illustration of a 3 start, possibly 4 star quality if measured by the CRA group). Other disciplines at Murray (speech pathologist, psychologist, QSP) were a part of this success but also agree that G needs more training and at this time transferring to a CILA or another placement would result in major regression for G.

A second example of a person we will call "E". He was admitted with a tracheostomy tube due to bilateral vocal cord paralysis, brittle diabetes and other medical issues.

Upon completing his Leisure Interest Survey and talking with E, it was found that he loved to dance, liked sports, and enjoyed attending church & other outings. Initially he was involved in activities at Murray but due to his medical challenges his outings were limited. (would be at a 1 or 2 star level) As the medical team including the speech pathologist worked on E's goal of decannulation, the tracheostomy tube was permanently removed. Currently, E may participate in events/outings of his choice. He still requires staff supports and training but the goal is to get E as independent as possible in all areas and we hope he can progress to a 4 or 5 star program.

I could site many more examples that would demonstrate how training has taken place during therapeutic activities to encourage our people to become more independent in their leisure lifestyle. However, it **MUST** be done in steps. It is important to allow the individual to make proper progression in program areas so the the person will be successful and not experience discouraging and often extremely damaging consequences. Programs are planned so that the person can practice newly acquire skills or experience enjoyment. An excellent example of this would be most recently when I took a person bike riding in a nearby neighborhood of Murray after teaching proper safety and cycling skills. CRA would probably say she went from a 1 star program (biking on an adult trike in the gym) to a 3 or 4 star program. Another person has recently learned to use public transportation to go to the local library with staff support. This is a huge progression as this person has extreme pica and when first admitted was not able to attend activities outside of her living area.

Examples of our people becoming more independent abound as the goal for each person who is admitted to Murray is to gain skills so he or she can succeed in community placement or programs. However, it is **imperative** that it is realized that to push community integration and placements when a person is NOT ready is only detrimental and that the necessary steps must be followed for it to be successful for the person!

As a person's skills, behaviors and medical issues are improving he or she is given the opportunity to enjoy a variety of activities and outings. People at Murray are not only given choices to visit those places already mentioned but also the local bowling alley, movie theaters, local farms, local parks, restaurants, grocery stores, orchards, the Centralia museum, Kaskaskia College and Centralia High School athletic events, and the Cultural Center. The use of money, and positive behavioral attitudes are

also taught while visiting rummage sales in the community, attending the city parades, & watching concerts. People request to attend St. Louis Cardinal games, Grizzlie games, and the St Louis Zoo. This is in addition to Special Olympic competitions (bowling, snow shoeing, track & field, basketball) and all the many activities such as dances, Murray Games and the Adult Prom, where again opportunities abound to teach positive behaviors. Through these experiences in the community and the beneficial volunteer program at Murray our people have made many friends and are not only accepted but considered citizens by people who live in Centralia.

One of Murray's greatest assets is the 20' by 40' in ground heated swimming pool. Therapy, attainment of skills and enjoyment are provided at this pool that also has a lift for those unable to use or learn how to use the ladder. Staff are trained in basic rescue skill, CPR/first aid and medical staff are involved in the decision if it is beneficial to visit the pool. (also as our people learn pool skills/acceptable behaviors they are given the choice to attend the Salem water park and Centralia Rec Complex) Physical therapy aides/OT /activity staff offer time in the heated therapeutic pool for relaxation and enjoyment for those persons who are more medically involved or have severe physical disabilities.

If a person requests to go somewhere in Centralia or other towns, the supports and attainment of skills are put in motion so that this can become a reality. This is not possibly in CILA's as skilled staff, transportation, resources, and knowledge is not available as it is at Murray - home to many people.

Thank you for reading this letter and considering more reasons to oppose the closure of Murray. I absolutely want the best for each person who lives at Murray and do not want some one to be moved whom it would not benefit. This would be disastrous to the persons we love!

Sincerely,

Melissa Cavitt, CTRS
Murray Center

We support the closing of Murray Developmental Center. This is not the type of service delivery in the best interest of each individual.

Sheila and Larry Fisher

DEAR SIRS,

CLOSING MURRAY DC IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO
GROUP HOMES ARE THE RIGHT THING TO DO FOR THESE PEOPLE.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION ON THIS MATTER.

RICHARD Semprevivo

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

My name is David Ford. I am vehemently opposed to the closing of the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. I know a lot about Murray Center. It has been a part of my life for the past 38 years. When I first began working at Murray Center, as a college student in 1974, Murray Center was indeed an institution. It was not the horror story type of institution as described by Geraldo Rivera in his 1972 expose' called Willowbrook, but nonetheless an institution. There were no bedrooms. Resident's beds were on a ward that slept twenty-five people. Resident's needs were all basically cared for at the facility and the people who lived there were rarely seen in the community. Basically what was provided was custodial care.

But times have changed! I left Murray Center and received my degree in Special Education from Eastern Illinois University. I began my professional career in 1977, as an Educator at the Bowen Developmental Center in Harrisburg, IL. By the time I returned to Murray Center in 1979, it was already starting to evolve into the home that it is today. Buildings were remodeled and became more homelike. Bedrooms were built and were decorated and individualized. Additional professional staff was hired and staffing numbers increased in order to provide active treatment throughout the course of the day. Residents had begun integrating more and more into the community. Interdisciplinary Teams at Murray have strived for years to place individuals that can live in the community into those facilities. We have had some success stories. In other cases, individuals came back to Murray in much worse shape than when they left. There are still a lot of individuals at Murray for whom community placement is not a viable option. Their disabilities, health issues or behaviors are just too severe.

Long before the announcement that Murray Center was on the Governor's closure list, my plans were made to retire this year. I am not writing this because of a need to keep my job. I am writing this because of a genuine fear of what will happen to the people who call Murray Center their home. I fear that many of these individuals will not survive a move outside of Murray Center.

While this closure would cause many other adverse factors in Centralia and the surrounding area, including loss of businesses and an increase in the already high unemployment rate in the area, my first and foremost concern is for the people who need the services that Murray Center offers. I ask that you recommend to the Governor that this fine facility remain open to continue to serve some of Illinois' most vulnerable citizens.

David E. Ford

April 16, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing in support of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL.

My name is Bob Demijan and I am a former Mayor of the City of Centralia. I also served on the Centralia City Council for eight years. I truly understand the economic importance of having Murray Center located in our City. The loss of this facility would create a hardship to Centralia and the surrounding area. There will not only be an increase in unemployment, but the tax revenue will decrease, businesses will suffer and the people of the community will have to relocate due to an already high unemployment rate, which is one of the highest in the state.

This concern may not be any different than what you have heard in other parts of the state also facing the possibility of facility closures. However, I was Mayor during the 9-11 crises and it hit this area extremely hard. We lost several large industries and lost being the hub and repair for a couple of railroads. Our population has also decreased during the last ten years. Choosing Murray Center for closure is not a good decision. Governor Quinn needs to consider the economics of the whole State of Illinois when choosing facility closures. The Centralia area will be greatly impacted if such a closure is made.

I am also a lifelong resident of Centralia. Murray Center's presence is very well known throughout our community. The people who live there are seen at the theaters, the shopping centers, sporting events, and participating in various fundraisers/festivals. We know them well and consider them part of our community. Removing them from their home is not in their best interest, nor is it the wishes of their family. The plan to place them in group home settings close to their guardians is just not feasible. There simply are not enough of these small group homes to house the discharges now, let alone the entire population of Murray Center.

As a former city administrator and as a resident of Centralia I ask that you keep these people in their home. Listen to the family members who speak on the behalf of their loved ones. Treat them with the respect they deserve and allow this community to continue to provide the best, quality service they have always provided to every person who lives at Murray Center.

Sincerely,

Bob Demijan,
Former Mayor and City Councilman of Centralia, IL

April 17, 2012

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to oppose the closure of Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL.

My name is Vern Wayman. I am an employee of Murray Center. I have more than 38 years of experience at Murray. I have seen many changes over the years, from the mindset of custodial care in the beginning to the current concepts of active treatment. I believe that community placement is a good thing, but only for those people who are ready for that transition. Murray Center has always strived to provide for the safety and wellbeing for all those who live here. We provide the structure and support that each person needs to help them reach their maximum potential. That is, that one day they will be able to live their life in the least restrictive environment, whatever that environment may be.

The people with medical needs are given the best care anywhere, 24/7. The people with behavioral needs receive quality care from staff who care about them. Some need various levels of a formal behavior program. At other times, perhaps it is just someone with a shoulder to lean on. Either way, all people who reside at Murray Center receive the care that they need. I want every person at Murray Center to have the best. If that means living in a CILA, or their apartment, then I'm all in favor of that. Some of the people who live here have come from a community setting, because there were issues, or they could not receive the services that they needed. They come to Murray Center, and we do our best to help get them 'turned around' and return them to the setting that they came from. Some of the people have gone out into the community and returned several times. We still work with them to achieve the goal of having them to return to the community and their quality of life.

Some of the people with serious medical needs might not be able to receive the level of care that is received here at Murray. We are able to provide around the clock care which isn't provided in the community due to cost and staffing issues.

When you look to close a facility, I would hope that you look at more than 'the bottom line'. I didn't know that there was a 'bottom line' when it came to dealing with the lives of human beings. Remember, when we no longer look at people as people, then we have lost our humanity. When we lose our humanity, our ability to see all people as human beings, we could find ourselves on a road that should not be traveled, to a destination that some of mankind has been to before, with dire results.

Sincerely,

Vern Wayman
136 S. Marion St.
Centralia, IL 62801

I support the closing of the Murray Developmental Center. People with disabilities (including my son) deserve community-based services!!

Sincerely,

Linda Hall

4835 Tarrington Drive

Hoffman Estates, IL 60010

We absolutely support the closing of Murray Developmental Center.

Sheila Marcial

I support the closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. People with developmental disabilities should live independently like everyone else. They also need our support. Thank you.

Cecille Escartin

As an Administrator of an ICF DD home and an advocate for individuals with disabilities I would like to express my support for the Murray Center closure. I commend the State of Illinois for attempting to do the right thing and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities by shutting down state operated facilities and promoting community based settings. The outdated and incorrect belief that individuals with disabilities cannot live in community settings is a disgrace.

I live within the area that Murray serves and am disappointed by the outrage and false information that is being presented by those who support Murray. I believe that some families who have loved ones living at Murray are scared of the changes proposed but I am also disgusted with the false accusations that the residents are more or less being thrown out into the streets. Unfortunately what I hear most is the fear of people losing their jobs. Somehow jobs have become more important than the lives of the individuals being served at Murray. With the abuse of salaries and pensions and the current financial situation of the Illinois budget, how could any responsible decision maker promote the continued operation of Murray?

My hope is that the true reason for the closure is to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and my advice to you is to present the data to support how their lives will improve. Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but everyone is not entitled to their own facts.

Bob Krebs, Royal Living Center

My daughter has lived in an State Operated Developmental Center for 23 years. About the time she was 27 worsening medical problems made it impossible for us to care for her at home. She went to live at Howe Center, an SODC in Tinley Park. Family lived 15 minutes away. When it closed, we checked out community placements. First we went online to check out their records. Community placements have less oversight than SODCs. There are beatings, rapes, deaths and other infractions. Community homes are fined for these offenses. The homes we looked at didn't have any current outstanding problems but, none had the medical supports that she requires. Some homes were located in industrial parks, on busy highways, and one home was in an area with no sidewalks and gravel streets. She loves to walk. RNs were on staff and a doctor on call. She now lives in another SODC that provides outstanding medical care on site. Her problems include: severe allergies, asthma, aspirating her saliva, numerous pneumonias (3/4 per year), bronchiastitis, feeding tube, ovarian cancer and she has no self care skills.

People who can live in community should be living in the community. The Rebalancing Initiative is a sham. It will close all SODCs forcing people who need the care provided by SODCs into the community. It will privatize the care of the Developmentally Disabled in Illinois. Will this truly end up being cheaper and still provide the same quality of service for those who need it? Please do not close Murray Developmental Center.

Linda Brown - 608 Cherrywood Drive - North Aurora, IL 60542

Murray Center provides excellent care and we must save this for our community and the surrounding communities not only for residence but for families involved with Murray and our community.

PLEASE SAVE MURRAY and the Animal Disease Center

Thank you for your time!

Marilyn Roberts

The Insurance Partnership Agency of IL Inc
201 South Locust P O Box 472
Centralia IL 62801

This note is to let you know that I support the closing of the Murray Development Center in Centralia. It is my understanding that this is being considered as an effort to rebalance the system toward increased community-based services for people with disabilities. PLEASE close it.

Lynn Rickert
Schaumburg, IL

April 17, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in regards to the proposed closing of Murray Center in Centralia IL. The economy in this area is very depressed and we cannot afford to lose 500 more jobs. This would be devastating for our area. There are many other areas that the State budget could cut and not put so many families out of work.

I worked at Murray Center as a student worker 25 years ago. I am now the Administrator at the Marion County Health Department. Working at Murray Center helped me decide to go into the nursing field and have a career in serving others.

Murray Center is home for so many people that need the expertise of a caring medical staff which includes doctors, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapist and qualified technicians that provide daily living assistance for the residents. Murray Center standards are to provide excellent care for the individual residing at Murray Center. Placing some of these people in the community homes will mean less medical oversight and necessary care that they need. This is not a safe environment for individuals with so many complex medical needs. In a community home, a registered nurse is only required to see the residents every thirty days, thus relying on support staff to recognize possible side effects of medication, drug to drug interactions, and, any signs of illness. Aggressive behavior and mental health issues will be very hard to deal with in a community home with no medical supervision. This is not the right choice for many of the residents at Murray Center.

In closing, I also want to say that the Murray Center Facility is in much better physical shape than some other state facilities. Why would you close a facility that was built in the 1960's and save facilities that were built in the 1850's? Politics need to be set aside when these issues are being decided. For the best care of the residence and the economy of our area, please reconsider this decision, and keep Murray Center open.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lori Ryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lori" and last name "Ryan" clearly distinguishable.

Lori Ryan, BSN. Administrator
Marion County Health Department

As one whose late sister suffered through the closure of the Howe Developmental Center and died not much after that, I wish to voice my strong opposition to the closing of any more developmental centers, particularly the Murray Center. Despite the organized propaganda fielded by groups with an axe to grind, the voices of the families of the disabled are rarely heard. The state-run centers, despite their drawbacks, are far superior to the alternatives proposed, such as privately run "houses." The personnel of the state centers are far more

caring and long-time professionals than at any of these other places. To close these state centers and relocate our children to inferior centers does a total disservice to them. If we can't care for the most vulnerable in our society, what does that say for our society as a whole? I am against the closure of the Murray Center.

Robert S. Gadbois
2650 N. Lakeview, #3606
Chicago, IL 60614-1873

To the members of COGFA,

I am writing to state my support of the closure of Murray Developmental Center as part of the State's plan to rebalance the service system for individuals with disabilities in the Illinois. Institutions such as Murray are antiquated and inhumane. Other states have proven that smaller, community-based services are better and increase the quality of life of persons with developmental disabilities. Institutions should not remain open in order to keep jobs!

I have a son with Down syndrome and it is my hope that when he is ready to move away from home, he can live in his own community where he enjoys many friendships and freedoms.

Sincerely,

Teri Ehrenhardt
1908 Century Dr.
Eureka, IL 61530

As the sister of three men with intellectual disabilities who live in the community and a committed advocate for people with disabilities I know this is the right thing. Don't bow to pressure from unions on this.

Nora Handler
Supporting Illinois Brothers and Sisters

April 17, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Melissa Dugan
1508 Brentwood Trail
Keller, TX 76248

RE: Murray Center, Centralia, IL

Position: Opponent

Murray Center has been home to my first cousin, born with Down's Syndrome in 1953, since 1964. This center has provided a stable, safe, home environment where her parents could not. Her level of mental retardation and physical deficits which include but are not limited to, expressive speech (currently speech is almost non existent), fine motor skills, and vision, make it impossible for her to perform ADLs (bathing, grooming, etc). I realize the odds of living beyond the average life expectancy of 60 years are against her, but I also know she is not the only resident in Murray who requires a high level of care. It is for those younger, as well as my cousin, that I am petitioning the state of Illinois to reconsider this closure.

The burden of care for families is very great emotionally, physically, mentally, and financially to care for the children/ young adults which have a high degree of mental retardation and/or physical deficits. Murray Center has been able to meet the physical and mental demands of these individuals, giving them value and purpose. For example, years ago my cousin pushed the wheelchair of a young girl who was blind when needed, this benefited her with value/ purpose and also the blind resident with a friend.

Not all residents are healthy enough to live in group homes, many need the one on one care Murray provides. Space has to be provided for these individuals in facilities like Murray. Even if alternative space could be found, uprooting a mentally challenged person and relocating to an unfamiliar environment with strangers, would have a negative impact such as confusion, insecurity which could lead to behavioral problems affecting the person, caregiver and possibly the local community. There would also be a great risk for medical issues to increase due to the stress of a change like this. This would negatively impact the healthcare structure as well. I believe the government would be creating more problems with this solution of closing down a viable, safe, healthy environment to in order to save government funds.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Melissa Dugan

Save Murray Center

Murray Center provides excellent care to approximately 280 special need residents. The 550 staff at Murray Center provides care other facilities can't. Many residents came from other institutions that couldn't handle them or properly care for them. Some residents live well past their projected life span due to the care given to them at Murray. Murray Center also provides 24 hour care and security to the residents. I believe moving these residents from the only home they know will have a detrimental effect on them.

Myrna Speiser

PLEASE CLOSE MURRAY DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER!

It is past time for Illinois to not have the reputation nationally of ranking 49th in the US in doing anything about getting people with disabilities out of institutions.

Illinois needs to assist the communities where these institutions exist as it has been too long that their economy has relied on institutionalization and warehousing people with developmental disabilities. We need to move Illinois out of the 19th Century and move forward in the 21st Century recognizing that people with developmental disabilities can be supported in their communities instead of having to live in institutions that offer them little quality of life.

Please close Murray Developmental Center NOW!

Thank you,
Karen McCulloh
Morton Grove, Illinois

I Support the closing of Murray Developmental Center.

Robert Peterson

Hello,
I support the closing of the developmental centers statewide, including Murray. My adult son with with severe autism and developmental delay is living nearby in a small CILA.
Candice Goldstein
620 Forest View Drive
Geneva IL 60134

April 17, 2012

Tim Dugan
1508 Brentwood Trail
Keller, TX 76248

RE: Murray Center, Centralia, IL

Position: Opponent

Murray Center has been home to my first cousin, born with Down's Syndrome in 1953, since 1964. This center has provided a stable, safe, home environment where her parents could not. Her level of mental retardation and physical deficits which include but are not limited to, expressive speech (currently speech is almost non existent), fine motor skills, and vision, make it impossible for her to perform ADLs (bathing, grooming, etc). I realize the odds of living beyond the average life expectancy of 60 years are against her, but I also know she is not the only resident in Murray who requires a high level of care. It is for those younger, as well as my cousin, that I am petitioning the state of Illinois to reconsider this closure.

The burden of care for families is very great emotionally, physically, mentally, and financially to care for the children/ young adults which have a high degree of mental retardation and/or physical deficits. Murray Center has been able to meet the physical and mental demands of these individuals, giving them value and purpose. For example, years ago my cousin, when needed, pushed the wheelchair of a young girl who was blind. This benefited my cousin with value/ purpose and also the blind resident with a friend.

Not all residents are healthy enough to live in group homes, many need the one on one care Murray provides. Space has to be provided for these individuals in facilities like Murray. Even if alternative space could be found, uprooting a mentally challenged person and relocating to an unfamiliar environment with strangers would have a negative impact such as confusion, insecurity which could lead to behavioral problems affecting the person, caregiver and possibly the local community. There would also be a great risk for medical issues to increase due to the stress of a change like this. This would negatively impact the healthcare structure as well. I believe the government would be creating more problems with this solution of closing down a viable, safe, healthy environment to in order to save government funds.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Tim Dugan

Judy Clifton-Sister/Guardian
Re: Warren G. Murray Developmental Center
Opposition to Closure

Dear COGFA Members,

My name is Judy Clifton; I am the sister and legal guardian of Douglas McDaniel, (Dougie as I have always called him) who has been a resident of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center for 36 years since he was 15 years of age. Prior to him being a resident at Murray Center, Dougie was a resident at Lincoln in Springfield. My parents had to make the very difficult decision to move Dougie into a home when he was 6 years old. Can you imagine being a parent in the position of having to making a decision like that? This was a hard decision for them, but one that had to be made because of all of Dougie's disabilities and the medical care he needed.

You see, Dougie is profoundly mentally retarded, he has severe Cerebral Palsy, Profound language disorder, Epilepsy, Encephalopathy associated with prematurity, Spastic Quadriplegia, Osteopenia, Mild Dextro Scoliosis, Anemia, Degenerative changes in C1-C5 Cervical Spine, PICA behavior, Onychiauxis, Onchomycosis, GERD, Erosive Esophagitis, Chronic Constipation, Chronic Allergic Rhinitis. He is visually impaired of object perception, Mild Nuclear Sclerosis, Constant alter Exothropia. He is mostly non-verbal. He is wheelchair bound. He has a Gastrotomy tube. It became too hard for my parents to handle all of Dougie's disabilities because he needed around the clock medical care.

Our mother passed away 12 years ago, our father is now 76 years old and his health is declining, our father signed guardianship over to me because of his declining health and lack of understanding of Dougie's medical care. Dougie is the only sibling that I have.

Almost 2 years ago Dougie got very sick; he could not eat or take his medicine. Dougie had very bad seizures, lost over 25 lbs very quickly. The staff at Murray Center was very good in caring for him; they gave him the very best care possible. They knew that something was wrong with Dougie's throat because he would not eat his favorite things, and he would point to his throat. Dougie made many trips to St. Mary's Hospital where I had to make the decision weather or not to have a feeding tube inserted into his stomach because his Esophagus was eroded. I chose to have the feeding tube inserted with the understanding that it would be used to supplement if Dougie wouldn't eat, and so that he could be given his medicine on a regular schedule. When Dougie returned to Murray Center he first was given his meals and his meds through the tube. Now with the hard work and care that the staff at Murray Center gave him, Dougie does not have to be fed through the tube and he takes his medicine orally, he is only given a supplement through the tube at night. Dougie will eat almost anything you put in front of him. He especially loves the cheese puffs that the staff buys for snacks, and he gets really excited when I bring him French fries from McDonalds, M&Ms and an occasional Pepsi. Dougie has had a remarkable recovery and has gained all of his weight back and then some. I attribute that to the staff at Murray Center.

Dougie is a very happy individual, he loves his home at Murray Center because it is the only home he knows and he loves the staff that takes care of him there. The staff knows him well and he

lights up that smile of his whenever someone walks by him and talks to him. Dougie enjoys teasing the staff that care for him, he enjoys listening to music and attending the special events that are provided at Murray Center for the residents. The other residents and staff at Murray Center are his family. His smile will warm your heart!

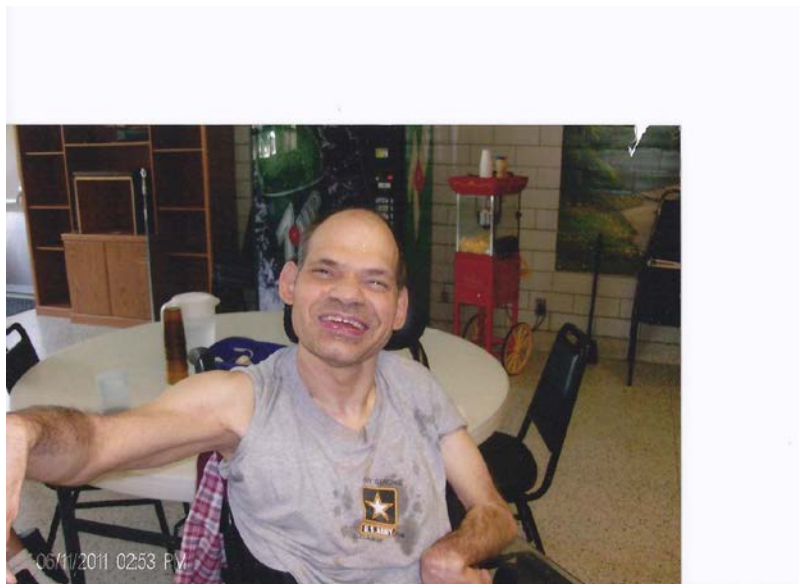
Just imagine being trapped inside of a body that cannot walk or run. Imagine what it must feel like to have someone say that they want to take you away from the only home you know and from the people who love you and care for you. Imagine someone saying that you're not important enough to get the care that you deserve because the budget needs cut. Imagine if God had not created Dougie or others like him. God had his reasons for making Dougie the way he is, we may never know those reasons. I believe he made Dougie and others like him to make the rest of us better people. It is our responsibility to take care of God's special people and to protect them.

PLEASE DO NOT USE DOUGIE AS A WAY TO CUT THE BUDGET. PLEASE DO NOT TAKE DOUGIE AWAY FROM HIS HOME WHERE HE IS VERY WELL TAKEN CARE OF AND SAFE. PLEASE DO NOT TAKE DOUGIE AWAY FROM HIS FRIENDS AND FAMILY. PLEASE DO NOT TAKE AWAY DOUGIE'S WONDERFUL SMILE! PLEASE DON'T CLOSE MURRAY CENTER!!!!

PLEASE LET DOUGIE'S SMILE WARM YOUR HEART!!!!

Sincerely,

Judy Clifton, Sister/guardian
2804 Idle Acres Lane
Edwardsville, IL 62025
Jude63380@sbcglobal.net



We need Murray Center to remain open for the residents, the staff and the communities.

Thank you

Gloria Wetzel
500 Broughton
Salem, IL.62881

March 6, 2012

TO OUR LEGISLATORS

I would like to introduce myself. I am an 87 year old widow with a 53 year old son- the youngest of four children . (Gregg Becherer born 3/14/59) 69 ½" tall 160# - profoundly retarded, with a mental age of fifteen months.

Gregg is a resident at the Murray Developmental Center since 9/20/65.

Gregg was a healthy, normal child – walked – talked - until at the age of 18 months when he was diagnosed with post infectious encephalitis – resulting in brain damage. After fourteen straight months of hospitalization we were able to bring him home.

Gregg has cerebral palsy - spastic diplegia - visually impaired – has no receptive and expressive language – short attention span- is now able to eat chopped foods. . Gregg uses his wheelchair to ambulate – has some transferability – needs staff to assist him for bathing, dressing, toileting and eating. –Gregg has limited socialization skills- only watching what is going on around him- prefers manipulating a ball of shoe strings that he ties in knots and unties. Gregg enjoys golf cart rides around the campus and car rides. Gregg attends the DT 1 program at Kaskaskia Workshop participating in training programs.

I am able to take Gregg for car rides on weekends . Staff place him in and take him out of my car. Murray is GREGGS HOME and he is happy there. HE DOES NOT ACCEPT CHANGE OF ANY KIND. I hold the staff at Murray in the highest regard . they do a wonderful job of caring for our residents. Gregg is not a candidate for the community and nor am I, at 87, able to care for him.

We need to keep the Murray DD Center in Centralia operating for the most profound, mentally and physically handicapped who have never been accepted in community settings and the autistic dually diagnosed who have failed in community settings and are now being helped to return back to the community. Where will these desperate families go if Murray is closed??? Please assist us in our endeavor to keep the Murray Center open in Southern Illinois!!!! Who knows maybe one of your family may need Murray

in the future!!!! I pray NOT for your sake !!!!!!!!!!!.

God Bless all of You and Yours.

Anita R. Becherer
6 Westgate Drive
Swansea Ill 62226

Murray Developmental Center needs to be closed simply because people who have disabilities have the same constitutional rights as everyone else.

They are and should be an integral part of our communities. Let's be fair and acknowledge the rights of all people.

Halima M. Jabuani, The Arc of Illinois.

We support the closing of Murray Developmental Center.

Shannon Ford

I am writing on behalf of 275 people who are unable to write to you - the current residents of the Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia.

In the very near future, you will be asked to vote on the future of this facility and although your vote is only advisory, it will have significant impact for the residents who call Murray home and for 550 employees who will become unemployed in a town where unemployment is already high. Instead of employees paying taxes, many will be added to the rolls of the unemployed.

Murray Center is home to people with profound disabilities. Many have been placed in Community Integrated Living Arrangement homes, only to have to come back to Murray. This solution has failed in the past, why should we expect it to succeed now?

I have visited the center and my first reaction is - this is not fair. When I see the problems in my life and compare them to what these residents have to face every day, my problems seem insignificant.

These are people with brilliant minds trapped in bodies that prevent them from communicating or with children's minds trapped in adult bodies.

They have behavioral issues, social issues. Some hurt themselves and require constant attention. To see some of these ravaged young bodies in specially-made wheelchairs should bring a tear to your eye. They do mine.

Despite this adversity, these residents thrive in the Murray Center setting. It should be obvious that the employees at Murray are in it for more than just a paycheck. They care and want to make a better life for people far less fortunate than themselves.

Murray Center staff have custom manufactured wheelchairs to meet the individual needs of each resident. They have built 185 of these special chairs for Murray residents and more for residents of other state centers. They do this much cheaper than what the state would have to pay for commercial custom wheelchairs.

These residents are accepted in the community. They are not looked on as monsters. Over 400 people regularly volunteer to help these residents, including athletes from nearby Kaskaskia College and high school students from Mater Dei Catholic High School in Breese. One family brought 84 volunteers to the annual Christmas Party last Christmas. Do other facilities receive this kind of support from the community?

Many of these residents have family that visit them regularly. Others have no visitors at all, and that is heartbreaking. Many have lived here all their lives and it is their home. They don't understand how someone from miles away who has never visited the facility can decide to take them from their homes.

When one mother asked about her child's future if the center is closed, she was told there would be individual meetings with the families later. Kevin Casey, the new director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities, said early discussions would indicate the closing is already a done deal. But he also told this woman it is his job to close Murray.

Forget, for the moment, the jobs lost and the massive support of the volunteers, think about the residents. Many have been placed in Community Integrated Living Arrangements, some as many as five times, but it has not worked and they come back to Murray.

The center has capacity to expand. If it is closed, what would happen to the campus and the building complex? Would that state have to continue paying for upkeep of a vacant facility? Would the property be returned to the previous owners, who can no longer farm the ground ?

Murray residents are unique and they make Murray Center unique. No other facility in the state has the success rate of Murray Center. Please visit the center and see for yourselves. And please visit some of the more pronounced cases, not the cases that Kevin Casey wants to showcase to support the state's position.

I realize the state is in bad financial shape, but it is not the Murray Center residents fault the state spends more than it makes every year, that the state uses money for pensions to fund other programs and has a fleet of planes to transfer state government from Springfield to Chicago. There is right and there is wrong and it is wrong to close the Murray Center, to continue to seek community placements for residents who are not able to fit into the community. There are hundreds of other places to cut before you close Murray.

Mark Hodapp

Editor, Carlyle Union Banner

We support the closing of Murray Center. Across the country, individuals with disabilities are being recognized as valuable contributing members of their communities. We commend Illinois for taking steps towards the goal of full community living for all citizens.

Michele Westmaas

DJ Westmaas

Andrew Westmaas

(Parents and adult sibling of Aubrie Westmaas, family member with disabilities)

Pittsfield IL

My name is Lydia Wilder. I am a close friend of a family whose son resides at Murray Center. Lance has been there for several years due to a vessel disorder in his brain, requiring him to have care at this facility. I have heard only good things about the care he receives at Murray! And I can assure you that this is not the case for the facility up here where his sister, with a related disorder, has been hospitalized. Until I became friends with the Dickens family, I was not aware of the varying qualities of care that exist in these facilities. Murray has been exceptional in their care of Lance.

The care given at Murray is also of good quality because the residents of Centralia who work there genuinely care for their patients. It would be an insult to their community to close Murray, as their heart is truly present in the quality of care they deliver to their patients. Why would you even consider closing such a facility?!

Please do not close Murray Center!

Thank you!

Lydia Wilder

River Forest, IL

April 2, 2012

Governor Patrick Quinn

Office of the Governor

207 State House

Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Governor Quinn

I am a family member of a resident of Murray Center. Kevin Wayne Yingst has lived at Murray Center for 42 years. The care Kevin Yingst receives at Murray Center is second to none. We are extremely happy and satisfied with the care and treatment he receives at Murray Center. His caregivers are like family.

Kevin had meningitis when he was a baby. He is unable to function in any way to take care of himself. He cannot walk, talk, sit up, pick anything up, etc. He functions at the level of a 6 month old baby. He is on a feeding tube and needs around the clock care to ensure his well being, including access to nursing care, which community group homes do not provide.

Kevin Yingst occasionally has seizures. Like the other 274 residents of Murray Center, he needs close supervision and more nursing care than a community group home can provide.

It is politically expedient, but morally wrong, to balance the budget woes of Illinois on the backs of the mentally ill and the developmentally disabled. They are without voices of their own and must depend on friends and family to advocate for them. If there were sufficient community-based resources for the developmentally disabled, many Murray residents would be using them. The medically fragile residents need intensive nursing care 24/7.

Keep Murray Center open for Kevin Wayne Yingst and the other 274 residents who need care.

Sincerely,

Loretta Maddox

To whom it may concern:

Warren G. Murray Developmental Center provides vital and irreplaceable services and has been a haven and a home for residents and their families.

Please do not close this facility as it would be devastating to employees, residents of this economically struggling region, but most of all, devastating to the residents of this facility.

Sincerely,

Sharon S. Reed, MS, LCPC

I am expressing my support for the civil right of people with disabilities to live in the community. Further, Illinois needs to stop relying on large congregate institutions.

Rachel Siler

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Timothy P. Healy. I am the Vice President of SEIU Local 1, Firemen & Oilers Division. I represent the Stationary Firemen and Maintenance Workers, Power Plant classifications throughout the State of Illinois.

In accordance with the rules for public comments or testimony consider this email the Union **standing in opposition to the proposed closure of the Murray Zone Center in Centralia, IL.**

Timothy P. Healy
SEIU Local 1
Firemen & Oilers Division
111 W. Washington, #1360
Chicago, IL 60602

Hello,

I am writing because I oppose keeping this facility open. I support the right of individuals with disabilities to live productive lives in the community, and the institutional bias makes this impossible. Further, it is financially irresponsible.

Thank you for your attention and support,

Carrie

Carrie Kaufman
Employment Opportunities Coordinator
Access Living
115 W. Chicago Ave.
Chicago, IL 60654

April 11, 2012

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability
ATTN: Facility Closure
703 Stratton Building
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Commission Members:

I am writing to express my unequivocal opposition to the closure of Warren G. Murray Developmental Center in Centralia, IL.

Mark Doyle, a member of the Governor's staff, has stated on numerous occasions the decision to close Murray Center wasn't about budget or politics; it was about policy and the Governor's legacy. I believe the most important aspect of this decision is the people. It's about the people that work at Murray Center. It's about the people that provide services to Murray Center. It's about the community/region that embraced the Center when it opened as a children's center in 1964. But most importantly it's about the people that live at Murray Center and call the Center HOME.

It amazes me how callous this decision and process has been. Everyone wants to talk about what is best for each individual, but at no time did anyone receive input from any of the 275 individuals who will be forced to move if Murray Center is closed. You don't get to preach person centered ideals and then fail to solicit input from the individual when it is inconvenient or in opposition of your goal.

These are people who have real life problems. Thankfully, they were able to find answers/comfort once they moved to Murray Center. I've witnessed numerous individuals who had severe behavioral issues prior to their admission to Murray Center. Along with the care, guidance, and support from the staff at Murray Center, these individuals were able to move and be successful. The reason being, each success story is based on the individual's needs. Some may be ready for a move in 6 months, while others may need more time. It is based on the person and when the person is ready. At no time should anyone be forced to leave his or her home and support system because it is policy or a legacy.

Sincerely,

Duane Karrick
Centralia, IL 62801

Dear Cogfa panel,

My name is Layla Malone, registered nurse at Warren G. Murray Developmental Center. Over the past 3 years I have faced many challenging and rewarding days. This population is extremely difficult to assess, diagnose and treat due to their limited communication skills. I rely a great deal on the direct service personnel that work with them day in and out that tell me "something just isn't right": they are sleeping excessively, scratching at staff, unusually aggressive, urinating frequently with a painful look on their face. I worry not so much about myself if Murray center closes, I worry who will tell their future nurse that "something isn't right" they are not their usual selves today. When working with developmentally disabled people for several years you become their friend, confidant, and family. How will anyone be able to compare in taking care of our family. The governor says keeping the center open is too costly. Because of the difficult nature of some people they demand a lot of attention and individualized care plans. Anywhere you go these personnel will be needed. Community based living does not provide then nursing care needed and deserved! Why take them from their home and family only to live with strangers whom they have never met? We employees of Murray center are here because we want to be and love our Murray family like our own. I want to take care of my patients and I want to be here. Every morning I am greeted with high fives from the men and hugs from the girls with questions of "I get go to work today" I smile and answer: "you bet your bottom dollar we are going!" They appreciate me and I appreciate them. Our relationship is based on trust and respect for one another. Being part of their support system is very rewarding to me. I feel that moving them away will only hurt them and their families. Thank you for you time.

Sincerely,

Layla Malone RN

My name is Becky Trost. I would like to oppose the closing of Murray center in centralia, Illinois. Many families rely on the center for their loved ones they themselves cannot take care of. The closure of Murray center would be devastating to many families in Illinois. Please oppose the closure and protect those who can't stand for themselves.

Becky trost.

Sent from my iPhone

April 19, 2012

Commission of Government Forecast and Accountability (COGFA)

Murray Center, Centralia, Illinois

Opposed to Closure

Honorable Commission,

My name is Wade Larson and I am the Executive Vice President of the Illinois Federation of Public Employees (IFPE), Local 4408, which is part of the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). I also work for the Illinois Department of Human Services at Elgin Mental Health Center and have for over eighteen years. I am writing to oppose the closure of Murray Center.

In my position with the IFPE, Local 4408 I represent the Security Officers at Murray Center along with Security Officers at all the other DHS facilities. Naturally you would expect someone with my position to oppose the closure of a facility, but let me tell you why I am really writing. I have had the opportunity to visit state facilities across Illinois and have a little different perspective being a state employee myself.

The thing that makes Murray Center different than any other state facility that I have ever been to is its employees. From the time you walk in you can feel the difference. The employees care not only about each other; they are passionate about the work that they do. The AFT just concluded a campaign entitled "I Make a Difference". The staff of Murray Center makes a difference in their patient's lives every day they come to work. Our current campaign is "Work that Matters" and I can not think of work that matters more than the work being performed here at Murray Center. They serve one of the challenging populations that the State of Illinois has; people with developmental disabilities. They do it with a caring attitude that is rarely seen in state government. As a father myself, if one of my children had been born with a developmental disability I would want them at a place like Murray Center.

I know that the Commission's main concern isn't about the people who work at a facility, or even the economic impact that closure would have on a community like Centralia. The Commission's main concern is the impact that closure would have the people that we are serving. As I have seen over and over from DHS is that most of their plans never seem to work out the way that they had anticipated.

Part of my job is to take DHS patients to visit placement facilities. The mass storage of people at these facilities is certainly less than desirable. We have had several of our consumers even refuse placement at some of these facilities. When the Ligas v. Maram lawsuit settlement was announced I knew that some of the facilities would be slated to close. The truth is the State of Illinois is not equipped to provide or monitor residential living arrangements for all the patients that DHS currently serves. This was

evident by recent news where the state monitors watching a troubled facility in the Chicago area were kicked out of it. A facility where there have been patient on patient assaults, rape, and even deaths. The oversight is currently not in place to adequately monitor all these locations. To place our most vulnerable citizens at one of these facilities is inexcusable. We all know that if we mandate this closure, someone will build a facility to house the displaced patients, but the question we have to ask ourselves "Is this the type of place we want to put somebody?" Until there are oversights in place to protect the citizens that we serve then I say the answer is "No". Citizens need a place not only to live in, but to thrive in. A place like Murray Center has shown us all that it is. We shouldn't even be discussing closing Murray Center; we should be talking about how to fund it. It's hard to imagine what Murray Center would be like today if we had fully funded it all along. I'm not sure how the employees could have done a better job, but I'm also sure that they do, because striving to provide the best service is what they are all about.

In closing I'd like to say that if we close Murray Center, those we serve will be certainly be worse off, but so will we all..

Respectfully Submitted,
Wade Larson,
Executive Vice President,
IFPE Local 4408

Greetings,

I'm writing because I support the closure of the Murray Center. I believe every person has the right to live in the least restrictive environment he/she can live in. I also believe that those who are worried about their jobs can find other ones(even if it necessitates moving), yet if those who are disabled aren't being given the opportunity even to choose to live elsewhere. As someone who has lived in other states, I know that there are many creative opportunities available in 2012 for people with disabilities. As someone who has lived in Illinois for 20 years, I am appalled that 22,000 people with disabilities are waiting for services yet we continue to pour money into institutionalization. Please use the money designated to assist people with disabilities to address the needs of those Illinois residents and not be distracted by the economic needs of the community.

Peace,
Lee Ann Kelly

Thursday, April 20, 2012

Dear Governor Quinn and COGFA,

Today on the day of the Murray Center rally in Centralia, I am writing in support of Murray Center and to ask that all possible avenues be examined to keep it open. I am the guardian for my brother, John Green, who is a resident of Grape Cottage. My mother kept John at home for 47 years and eventually she was unable to continue caring for him. John became belligerent at home due to lack of mental and social stimulation. Since he has lived at Murray, John has been calm and happy, and he gets along well with everyone in his cottage, staff and residents alike. In fact, he is well-loved by everyone there and is known for his funny and honest comments.

I and the rest of John's family have been incredibly pleased with the turnaround in John's behavior. He receives mental, emotional, and social stimulation that could never have been provided for him in a home setting. He attends the Kaskaskia Workshop 5 days a week by riding the workshop bus back and forth from Murray Center.

Murray Center has been a godsend to my brother's life. He was headed in a downward spiral the last few years he lived at home, and that was completely reversed upon his moving to Grape Cottage. I have observed the staff at Grape Cottage handle all kinds of situations with calm and a steady hand. The program at Murray defines target goals for each resident and puts into practice a system of achieving those goals. John's major goals while at Murray have been to handle situations with calm, to get out of bed early enough to make breakfast and the workshop bus on time, to eat more slowly, and to handle more of his personal hygiene himself. The staff has handled all of these goals with observation and care.

John may be one of Murray's higher-functioning residents, but the behaviors he was exhibiting before his admission to the center were severe and potentially life-threatening to himself and others. The targeted programs at Murray have enabled him to live a life free from rage. His epilepsy has also been brought under complete control.

It is my belief that Murray Center saved my brother's life. In addition, Murray made it possible for my brother to become a much beloved community member with many friends. Murray Center has saved the lives of many people, people who would not have a chance in any other setting. Through its programs it has allowed them to find, to make and to expand the contributions they are capable of making. These residents depend upon stability in their environment to continue not only progress, but survival.

Please do not let this long-standing record of human achievement come to an end. The vast majority of Murray's residents cannot abide a major change in their living quarters without major disruption. The results of this kind of disruptive change were made evident earlier in Illinois history when 26 former residents of Lincoln Developmental Center died after their removal to settings which did not meet their needs.

I ask of you, Governor Quinn and COGFA members, in order to prevent tragedy and on the contrary to continue services which are known throughout the country for their successes, to explore any avenue possible to keep Murray Center open. Do there exist multi-functional uses for now empty buildings which could include rental to other groups that need such facilities (physical therapy or other clinics, nursing homes or office space for non-profit groups, community or small colleges, or small businesses) or perhaps rental to other states who have populations that could benefit from them?

Please do not ask current Murray Center residents to leave their home. Lives are being saved there.

Thank you very much,

Nancy Green Brophy
3507 Angelin Cove
Bartlett, TN 381325

(Though I now live in another state, John has been an Illinois resident all his life and has a large family who live in central and southern Illinois.)

Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability,

Please consider voting to oppose the closing of Murray Center. Please consider how America sees Illinois as a compassionate State that cares for those less fortunate and in desperate need of our help.

There are many ways to save money for Illinois, one being eliminating the front license plate on cars.

Thank you,
Gary Bartholomew
900 Lake Avenue
Wilmette, Illinois 60091

Dear Governor and COGFA Members

After attending the meeting last night on the Murray Center Closing, I felt compelled to write this letter. Although no one will deny the closure of Murray will cause untold hardships on our already unstable economy the underlying theme was the welfare of the most vulnerable residents of our community.

I appreciate the statements by the disabled who spoke about their terrible experiences at other facilities, but with all due respect they never called Murray Center their home.

The residents of Murray are embraced and respected in our community. On any given day you can see our kids shopping at Wal-Mart playing in the park or eating at their favorite restaurant. We treat them

with respect and you will never see anyone laughing at or making derogatory remarks because they are our neighbors and friends. These special people are so precious to us. Do you remember what it was like when you were a child waiting for Santa? The excitement and anticipation? These adult kids of ours have this same wonder and enthusiasm every day. Truth be told many of us envy this joy and trust that we see in them. They give as much as they get. Now all this being said, Please explain to me how taking our friends from the home they love and people who love them will be in their best interest. So you see if you close Murray Center you will be breaking up a family. Do you remember the story of the Pied Piper; no one missed the children until their laughter was no longer heard. Don't take away our laughing children. Please don't think of us as a Development Center, think of us as a subdivision with seven homes with lots of kids.

Murray Center can be made even better with some improvements. It could be made more energy efficient; I believe you already have heard that proposal. The overtime could be cut if the investigating committee were not so far behind on complaints, and I'm sure there could be other improvements as well.

I have given you many reasons for keeping Murray Center open, but I haven't heard one good reason for closure.

We know Murray adds money to the coffers of the state. We have over 800 people who pay state income tax, and state sales tax, to say the least. The federal government also contributes 10 million to the cause.

How can the state afford to give up that much income? As I write this letter I keep asking myself that same question over and over and I can only come to one conclusion, it all goes back to the federal government reimbursement. The better a facility is run the less money you can get from the federal government. So if you have a home that is run poorly and puts its residents in danger the more money the federal government will fork over to bring it into compliance. That is wrong in so many ways I can't even count. Shame on you Mr. Governor. You should be ashamed of trying to balance your budget on the lives of our most vulnerable residents.

Mr. Governor perhaps you could look into the double dipping that goes on every day and costs the states millions, if you would consider doing away with that our finances might improve. I'm sure that would be just as popular as your plan to close Murray Center. Also all those consultants fees that are being paid to the specialists that are going to help with placing Murray residents elsewhere would care for those same residents for a year.

I humbly request you , please find another way to save our state.

Sincerely

Peggy J Altenbaumer

I, Phillia Mitchell, am asking that you would hear the voice of the people. Please do not close down Murray Developmental Center. The mentally disabled should not be the ones to suffer the consequences of too much spending in Illinois. Many of these people are helpless. They have no voice of their own. These are the truly needy and should be the FIRST ones that are taken care of. What is our society coming to, when we don't care for the helpless? Please do not do this to these precious lives.

Sincerely,
Phillia Mitchell
Manhattan, IL
815 478-4070

My name is Karen Rosa. I didn't get a chance to testify at the hearing. My brother Ron File is a resident at Murray Center. I am his legal guardian along with our mother. We talked about looking into a group home for Ron, so I went to work in one to check them out. I worked there for about 5 years. The level of care there is far worse than Murray. First of all the staff was in and out like a revolving door. I wouldn't be afraid to say 50 people came and went. That included 6 different Q's and no Q for the last 3 months I was there. The training is very minimal

Just a little common sense and you could pass their tests without attending a single class.

And with the pay scale .25 over minimum wage a lot of people wouldn't put up with the stress of this job. It takes a very special person. There were med errors also because there was very little training for this, too. And anyone could pass meds. I did. The nurse would come around just about once a week to check the books. They wasn't around very much. They only had 2 or 3 staff for 16 residents. And 11 to 7 shift was only one staff to 16 residents. They wouldn't hire more cause they didn't want to spend the money. Then if there was no cook some nights we had to do the cooking, too. This led to some activities to be cancelled because there wasn't enough staff to go around. They had a hard time finding help. They still have ads in the paper all

the time. And my brother wouldn't be accepted for very long because of his behavior problem.

If somebody gets out of hand we were to call the police. And the workshop would send them back if they act up there. And one of the rules of the group home is they have to be able to go

to work or they can't live at the group home. This was one of their MANY rules. They even cut the residents off from having their own sodas or snacks. And they don't have any machines for them to buy them. As far as going out in the community more, my brother is in the community a lot more. At the group home they went to work everyday but that isn't the community. They were allowed to sign up for one activity a week and one shopping day a month. And some of those were cancelled because of low staffing. Between the lack of care, mentally and physically it didn't take long for us to decide that Murray Center was the perfect home for Ron. He is always telling us about all the places he goes to. Shopping, restaurants, movies, parks, etc. ALL IN THE COMMUNITY! He loves the staff and they genuinely love him. When we take him out to eat or shopping we have to stop many times for him to stop and talk to someone he knows.

Resently he had to have his colon removed and he wears a bag. While in the hospital everyday

3 or 4 of the staff came by on their way to or from work. They are loving and caring people. So Murray Center is the best place for my brother,Ron. It is his HOME.He loves it there.

Karen Rosa

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am writing in opposition to the closing of the Murray Developmental Center in Centralia. My brother has been a resident of the Center since it opened nearly 50 years ago. The Murray Center has been his home continuously since then. Because of his disability, he becomes very anxious when his routine changes. He can be and has on occasions become violent when his routine is altered. He and many other Murray residents are not candidates for "independent living," or group home placement.

My brother and the other residents of Murray need the facility and the care and structure it provides. I urge you to carefully consider the needs of the residents and to deny the requested closure of this needed facility.

Thank you,

William A. Sunderman
600 Jackson Avenue
Charleston, IL 61920-2076

April 22, 2012

My name is Gayle Munie. I live in Rockford, Illinois, and I have 2 sisters at Murray Developmental Center. I drove 350 miles to be a part of the COGFA hearing on the closure of Murray. I understand that there were time constraints that forced the commission to end the Murray hearing before the agenda was completed, but I believe this was unfair to the Murray Developmental Center, its residents and the family of those residents.

There should have been more foresight given in creating the agenda. Murray is one of the larger SODC's on the closure list, and 85% of the residents are profoundly disabled. That means there are a lot of concerned family members! The community of Centralia, in which Murray is located, would be severely impacted by the closure of Murray. That adds to the already large number of concerned people who wanted to testify at the hearing.

I believe that at this hearing, priority should have been given to the testimony of people that would be directly effected by the closure of Murray. Instead, testimony was heard from representatives of organizations that had previously testified in other closure hearings. There was also testimony from individuals who had no direct knowledge of Murray about the "wisdom" of closing Murray. People who had never visited Murray, just driven past the cottages or simply spent a few hours visiting were given priority over those with direct, continuous experience with daily life at Murray and with its residents. This was truly unfair.

I respect that the commission altered the agenda to accommodate those in wheelchairs. However, family of Murray residents, who are too profoundly disabled to appear at the hearing, were some of those whose testimony was never heard because the hearing ended before the agenda was completed. Those family members would have given important testimony about the quality of care given, and the advances residents have achieved through the programs and specialized equipment available only at Murray. Many of these advances were made after repeated failures at group homes. Only Murray was able to give them the quality of life they deserve. This testimony would have been based on years of experience with Murray.

Murray staff members didn't have an opportunity to offer testimony. Their direct experience with the quality of care, programs, equipment and the advances residents have made would have been important!

Community members weren't able to tell the commission about the devastating economic impact the closure of Murray would have on the community. But more importantly, they couldn't explain the close ties that exist between the Murray residents and the community. Murray Developmental Center and its residents are respected and welcomed in the community of Centralia! That's what quality of life is all about – being cared for and respected.

There were 25 people on the agenda who didn't have an opportunity to give their testimony. I don't know exactly what would have been said, or even more importantly, how much weight this testimony would have held with the commission's decision. But there's no question that Murray Developmental Center was not given a fair hearing. For the sake of Murray's 275 residents, 540 employees and 13,000 Centralia residents, I pray that COGFA recognizes this.

Respectfully submitted,

Gayle Munie
7937 Ingram Road
Rockford, IL 61108
gmunie@aol.com

Dear COFGA Member,

Many thanks for the delegation which came to Centralia on April 20. I desire this testimony to be included for COFGA members consideration. It comes after listening to testimony given by the Governor's Staff. I hope you find it useful in your on - going deliberations.

Rev. Dr. Philip W. Chapman

Observations from the COFGA Hearing held in Centralia on April 20, 2012

Due to time constraints I couldn't testify verbally. I share the following personal observations. Representatives John Cavaletto, Paul Evans, Dwight Kay, and Senators Kyle McCarter and Jones did an excellent job questioning the Governor's Staff sent to explain the closing of Murray Center. Senator James F. Clayborn Jr. brilliantly, with great depth and power, explained the damage to the Clinton County economy.

Criterion Used to Determine Closures

Despite numerous questions by legislators, the Governor's Staff did not adequately explain the criterion used to rank facility closures. In fact, FOIA requests sent by Representative Cavaletto were not honored by the Governor nor his staff to the satisfaction of the legislators mentioned. Representative Evans questioning revealed surveys were completed at different times supposedly leading to different criteria for closure. However, what information was sent on at least one form was flawed. **Governor Quinn never provided the information required to make an informed public decision.**

Notable Contradictions During Testimony

1-At one point a member of the Governor's staff said the movement of the Murray residents would lead to an improvement in care. At another time, that they could not tell what would happen to Murray's Residents if moved. They had no hard data to prove their point.

2-**Senator McCarter** raised the issue of jeopardizing resident's life by closure. The Governor's staff indicated any previous studies conducted by the state about this issue were flawed and therefore we had nothing to go on. If there is no hard data, and since they are moving residents to the same sort of CILAS as previously, where people did die, how can they say lives will not be in jeopardy? **I hope the COFGA Members review this portion of the testimony I would have thought the Governor's staff would have spent considerable time and effort to clarify the measures used to ensure the Constitutional right to life of Murray Center residents. They did not. They basically replied moving the residents to CILAS is now 'policy'.**

3-During Representative Kay's, Evan's, and McCarter's questioning they made a variety of statements. At one point they said the facility closure was due to budget considerations. At another, to

provide better care. But for neither issue did the Governor's staff prove care would be better nor that there was not a way to provide for Murray Center in the budget.

4. Representative Cavaletto and Jones asked about the requirements that staff include family preferences and wishes in treatment. Many family members testified they wanted their children or relatives left in Murray. These wishes seemed to be overlooked by the Governor's Staff.

5. The Governor's Staff provided data that Murray Center treatment cost \$200,000 per individual. However, a division of the Murray Center budget by the 280 people there showed it was \$150,000 per individual.

6. The Governor has never visited Murray Center, seen the residents, nor talked with staff or families.

CONCLUSION

I observe Illinois is in deep debt brought about by irresponsible spending over many years. Illinois has 8 billion dollars in unpaid bills. Closing Murray Center seems to be a politically expedient decision that may abrogate the Constitutional Right to Life to Murray Center residents. Additionally, the economic impact will be devastating. Clinton County will lose over 600 jobs and sixty million dollars in income.

Rev. Dr. Philip Chapman, Chairman, Faith Based Subcommittee to SAVE MURRAY CENTER

Greetings, my name is Jesse Wylder, I am 22 years old, I apologize for any punctuation or grammar errors, I never was very good at this, I never thought in high school that my public speaking classes would have to be put to use telling people whom until very recently I considered highly educated, that closing one of the top ranked homes for the developmentally disabled was a bad idea. Murray Center houses a great concentration of highly disabled people, not everyone at murray can take care of themselves, i'm talking about people who need a 5 month - 5 year, to sometimes 5 decade plan to learn to brush their teeth. if we forget about the jobs being lost in the community, forget about the budget crunch, forget about the deal-making being done to bring all the people into smaller homes instead of state run homes, and just focus on the residents, we still see this is a bad idea, no one has asked the residents at murray what they want, forget taking the choice out of the parent's hands, this is taking the choice from the residents that we are supposed to be helping as well.

I have ADD, this is a learning disability, not a developmental disability, but growing up going through school systems which were ill equipped to handle someone with my needs, dealing with teachers who could not understand my struggles day to day remembering names much less focusing on my studies, i cannot imagine how incredibly difficult it will be for these residents to be placed in facilities which are ill equipped to deal with not only their mental disabilities like the school systems were with me, but with there physical disabilities as well.

governor quinn says this is in the best interest of the residents based on studies and research he has read, but how many of his senior staff, himself included, have worked with developmentally disabled people on a one on one basis? i have, i worked in a special education class as part of my high school courses as a student helper, and continued as friends with many of the people i worked with after i and they graduated. i know the level of care they require, even small 24 hour 2 and 4 bed homes cannot provide the care they need.

we are taking away the last choice of a group of constituents who already have so few choices, help to put an end to this travesty and keep murrey center open for them.

i would like to take time now to speak about the finances and the budget.

while i understand that the budget needs balanced and we are still in an economic crisis even though we are slowly emerging from it, and we need to cut things from the budget. Why would one of the first choices for closure be the one facility, the one home, which houses the more severe cases of developmental disability, the one facility with the most people who would not be able to assimilate into a community setting? rather than close the facility shouldn't we restructure this facility to give the residents more freedom to choose for themselves whether they continue to live in a state run facility or whether they goto a community based setting?

As for jobs we aren't just talking about 270 jobs, or 100,000 jobs, we are talking about an entire area's worth of jobs, everything in this area depends upon murray center, our grocery stores, our gas stations, even our street sanitation workers. without murray center stimulating the local economy with this money, who will purchase these products? who will pay for trash services, who will buy gas, noone will have the money.

as for the testimonies of those who have spoken today, we have heard from many, few from murray center, yes many were abused in other homes, many were neglected, but murray center should not be closed based upon the sins of its brethren, we heard from murray center residents in support of murray center, only in support.

finally, in the interest of time i will leave you with this, governor quinn, we gave you your job, didn't you like it? why are you trying to take ours?

thank you for your time and consideration,
sincerely in opposition of closing murray center,

Jesse Wylder

Name: Ben Stratemeyer CPA

Facility Proposed: Warren G Murray Center - Centralia, IL 62801

Position: Opponent

Date: April 23, 2011

On Friday, April 23, 2012 COGFA held its hearing regarding the proposed facility closing of the Warren G. Murray in Centralia, IL. I thank you for your service and the time you gave our community. I, like many other concerned citizens of the community, sat through the hearing hoping to learn more to bolster our position. I realize that the every proposed closure has a negative effect on the local economy. Every proposed closure has a negative effect on the recipients of those services. The state's decision to close the SODD facilities is a long term policy change that has been made by elected officials.

Many other states have made this similar policy decision, but implementation has not been perfect. Many of those states handle severe cases of disability through the courts, nursing homes, and/or medication. While the state may want to minimize facilities, it will not completely do away with them. The decision on which facility to close should be based on good policy not some other executive criteria that is not made public. It appears that that members of the agency's team really could not justify the closure of Murray Center as compared to other facilities. It even appears discrepancies in the scoring were inconsistent. While time did not permit, clarification of some of the following issues were not addressed.

1. Are any Developmental Disability facilities under investigation for abuse by the US department of Justice?
2. Are any DD facilities under threat of having federal reimbursement pulled?
3. Which DD facilities have the highest federal reimbursement rates because of attention to detail of the records?
4. Which facilities are the low cost facilities after federal and private reimbursements?
5. Are all of the DD facilities handicap accessible? How much will it cost to make those DD facilities handicap accessible?
6. Is it good policy to only have facilities in the Chicago area and Southernmost Illinois (only minutes from KY, an hour from TN, and an hour and half from AR.)? In fact, families from Arkansas, Kentucky, and Tennessee would be closer to the southern facility than families from Belleville, Edwardsville, Effingham or Springfield that would be closer the southern facility than a facility in the Chicago area.

In regards to the economics of such a policy change, DHS indicated that the cost of housing a resident is about half of that of a state facility. More analysis really needs to be done. While that fact may be true, it is misleading. The state facilities house the medically fragile and the physically impaired. The private group homes would not have the medical staff in such a small setting. Secondly, the private homes can pick the most profitable residents (least costly).

Lastly, in regards to private homes, I have worked for a vendor that has done business with the state. It is no secret that the state takes months to pay its bills. The plan for private homes to be built, staffed, financed, and operated with residents without getting paid timely is not realistic. In fact for the state's plan to work mathematically, its finances will have to be fixed.

In closing, please take some of these thoughts into consideration on your recommendation on Murray Center.

On Friday April 20 I accompanied a good friend Loretta Maddox to Centralia, IL. for a meeting regarding the closing of Murray Center. After attending the meeting we went to visit Loretta's son who is a resident of the center. He is a young man of 42 with the mentality of a 6 mo. infant. When his mother whispers in his ear he coos and smiles like a baby. After learning about Kevin, I had another friend contact me telling me of her 45 year old daughter who is also a resident of Murray Center. Her daughters name is Willa Dawn Wright and has lived at Murray for 40 yrs. After seeing in person all of these adult (children-babies) I can not see how anyone could be so cruel to such innocents as to take away the only home they have ever known ! ! ! They said at the meeting that they could be placed elsewhere - ridicules - the nearest facility that would be capable of taking care of Kevin is near St. Louis, Mo. a 200 mile one way for his mother. And they also mentioned returning them to their homes - Kevin's mother is handicapped herself and Willa Dawn's father has lung cancer and her mother has her hands full taking care of him.

Please reconsider the thought of closing Murray Center. I truly believe that many of these residents will die in the first year just for not knowing what is happening to them and the FEAR.

76 Year old life time resident and tax payer of Illinois !

Juanita V. Fox
8812 E. 1050th Ave.
Robinson, IL. 62454

I was at the CoGFA meeting in Centralia, Il. at the High School gym on April 20, 2012.

I am a mother of a resident of Murray Center in Centralia, Il., Willa Dawn Wright. She has a mantality of approximately a 14 mos old. 120 lbs. She is profoundly retarded, doesn't know me, and is unable to sit up or help herself in anyway. She is incontinent, wears diapers full time. She's on a feeding tube and needs constant monitoring. Her needs are so many they are too numerous to mention. Murray Center is the only facility that can give the type of care she needs. The Staff at Murray center are the greatest

in giving care to the residents. They are concerned about the residents and their families. Willa has been there for 40 yrs and the only home she has ever known. Please have compassion and think what it would be for you to be forcefully uprooted from your home after that many yrs. Murray Center is a MUCH needed facility and the closing would be devastating to so many residents and their families. I am pleading PLEASE KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN.

I am an arthritic, 77 yrs of age. Her father has lung cancer so we are doing well to take care of each other. We are unable to care for her in our home. I feel if she should go to another facility she will be dead within a year.

Again I say "PLEASE KEEP MURRAY CENTER OPEN."

Sincerely,

Mary Lou Wright (Mother, Guardian of Willa Wright)

902 E South Av.

Olney, Illinois 62450

Dear Commissioners:

I'm twelve and I know what the effect the closure of Murray would have on the residents. To start this letter I would like ask the governor, Quinn, if he would like for his home to be closed down. How would you like it if your home was closed? The residents at Murray center are family to my parent's who work there at Murray center. Murray center is not an institution it's a home for Illinois most vulnerable citizens. You know they are citizens of Illinois too. Please be their voices. Why close Murray center if it make's money, would it or would it not lose money for the state? How would that save money, is that not first 1st grade math? If you can see the smile on the faces of the residents when the staff are around the residents, it would change your mind about this closure in a heart beat. When I speak I speak for all kids that has a parent or parents that work at Murray center that the closure will devastate all of us. Most of my friends parents work at murray center, will I ever see my friends again

SaVe MuRrAy CENTER!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Mason Koppen

875 West 13th

Centralia, IL 62801

Thank you once again for entering my correspondence into the record. Although I was on the agenda for the Centralia (Murray Ctr) hearing, I didn't get an opportunity to speak due to the extended time frame of earlier testimony. So, I am especially grateful to have my perspective entered and considered.

As the former OIG Investigator for this area, I was particularly taken aback by the testimony regarding post-closure mortality rates of Lincoln, Howe, and Mabley Developmental Centers. Please confirm for

yourselves, but as I understand from testimony and from my own personal experiences with OIG, these facilities were all similar to Murray in the aspect of population (census and status). Within one year of closure, one facility experienced deaths of 29 former patients, and another saw 27 pass away. I'm not clear on the third, as testimony was a bit unclear (perhaps by design).

This is, by far, the most poignant and ultimately important measure of how successful earlier closures have been, and more importantly, how successful we can reasonably expect closure of Murray Center to be. We can talk forever about policy versus fiscal justification, etc., but the expected and clearly documented loss of life from earlier experiences should be the primary consideration when assessing such proposals.

During a normal year, facilities such as Murray can reasonably expect one to three resident deaths due to natural causes, normally attributed to the progression of physical conditions inherent with this population. I offer this from my own experiences as the OIG Investigator, and as Marion County Deputy Coroner for the last 11 years. Residents of Murray, in deteriorating health, are transported to St. Mary's Hospital in Centralia- this is where death, as tragic and unfortunate as it may be, occurs for Murray residents. Deaths are reported to OIG, and are documented and in some cases, investigated by the coroner's office. Therefore, I'm reasonably confident in offering my assertion that there are normally 1-3 such deaths in a normal year for Murray, and presumably, the same was true for Howe, Lincoln, and Mabley in the years prior to closure. However, I urge you to investigate this aspect further for yourselves.

Therefore, we can reasonably expect the same results post-closure for the residents of Murray Developmental Center; from past experience, is it logical and prudent to expect that within 12 months of the closure of Murray Center, approximately 25 (to be conservative) deaths will occur. Three of these (again conservatively) would have died regardless of closure. Therefore, we can expect that at least 20 people currently served by Murray Center will be lost within 12 months of closure.

Testimony by the DHS staffers at the Murray COGFA hearing seemed to minimize and trivialize these facts, inferring that the earlier deaths were in various settings such as nursing homes, CILAs, ICFDDs, etc. I offer you that WHERE these deaths occurred is of little or no consequence- the fact that these people DID die post-closure, when they clearly would not have otherwise, should have hit us all in the face, as it did me.

So, all other discussion aside, closing Murray Center will clearly lead to the untimely deaths of at least 20 people; citizens among our most vulnerable, whom we are charged with taking exceptional measures to ensure appropriate and acceptable care. There should be no further discussion or consideration of closing Murray or any other Developmental Centers, since it is clearly the relocation of the residents, to whatever alternate setting, that is traumatic enough to cause their death.

It is often said that the definition of insanity is repeating the same actions time and again, while expecting different results. It is ironic, then, that the very department charged with the guardianship

and care of these people is advocating for their demise, albeit at the behest of a misguided and ignorant Governor. I would challenge Governor Quinn and Secretary Saddler, along with Director of Developmental Disabilities, to visit Murray, tour each cottage, and identify at least 20 individuals they deem expendable to meet their targets and plans.

To that end, I would fully expect judicial injunctions on behalf of Jacksonville and Murray to be filed if the Governor proceeds to closure. I suspect your committee recommendation will be much more prudent and logical than this Administration's apparent judgement, but I also suspect the Executive Branch will move to close regardless of your findings. That being the case, any court in our land, including the Illinois Supreme Court, will surely rule on behalf of the residents, of whom at least twenty would be expected to die at the Governor's hand. No court will ignore this.

I can tell you that as Coroner, I will ensure that any of these folks who pass away in my county post-closure, attributable to the effects of the closure itself, will have death certificates certified to reflect the primary cause of death as appropriate, and the manner of death reflecting reality as well. None of these will be "swept under the rug". I will see to it that those responsible are held accountable. The resulting consequence of such a finding speaks for itself.

Twenty people. At least. All expendable, in the insane world of saving a few dollars. I urge this Administration to save money- there is an obvious and pressing need to do so. But not here. Not at the cost of several lives.

I am confident that your collective recommendation to the Governor will be to keep Murray Center open. He will then choose to honor or ignore your recommendation- I urge you to advise him of the potential and expected relative effects and consequences of closure. There can be no other factors considered, and there can be no other decision than to keep Murray Center open.

Thank you once again for your time and for your collective and individual efforts in this process. We very much appreciate your dedication and objectivity.

Please enter this statement into the public record along with my previous messages. Thank you-

Troy Cannon
Salem

I feel it would be an injustice to the families and their loved ones who reside at Murray Center to close this facility. I know how difficult it would be to give up my home and be made to move and I have all my faculties. How do you think someone who has mental and/or physical problems would feel having to leave a place they have known for many years? How would you like being made to leave your home of many years? It is the responsibility of people to take care of people who cannot take care of

themselves. I always think of what we are taught by Jesus. Treat one another as you want to be treated.

Linda Moergen

When all the letters are read and the speeches are made it all comes down to one concept: The families who know and love the residents the most should be trusted to know what is best for them and allowed to choose where they want them to live. No one should assume that they know more or care more about them. Those who have had the opportunity to choose where they live should allow others to do so also.

Carla Bauer

I would like to express my position as a proponent of the Murray Center closure - I am in favor of Murray closing. I am an Administrator of a 16 bed ICF DD home and have seen firsthand the struggles and challenges of those living in an institutionlike environment. This outdated practice of institutionalizing individuals because of a disability is a disgrace. We feel so strongly about the need for change that we have voluntarily entered into a closure and downsizing agreement and are converting our facility to a CILA.. We have made this decision and commitment in a time when CILA rates are grossly inadequate but it is what is best for our residents.

I attended the Cofga hearing at Centralia and sat quietly in the stands listening to comments of those around me. All I heard was talk of jobs, jobs, jobs, pensions, pensions and pensions. I never once heard anyone even mention the residents that they serve (how sad). If I were paid a great salary and had an unbelievable pension I would not want to lose them neither, but who is this about? It needs to be about the individuals with disabilities and their right to live in community based settings. We can provide quality care at a fraction of the cost Murray is doing it at (we are doing it now).

You are blessed to be in a position where you can make decisions. It is time for decision makers to make decisions based on what is right and not on how it will effect my next election.

Individuals with disabilities deserve to have choices and input on how and where they live. They deserve to live in communities just like you and me. Please support closing Murray and all state operated facilities.

Robert Krebs

Murray Center is a home for people who either want to live there or need to live there, or both. Places like Murray Center wouldn't exist if there wasn't a want and/or a need. Anyone can leave any time they want and yet they don't. In fact their families are spending huge sums of money and energy fighting for their right to remain there.

I can't help it, but thoughts of Nazi Germany keep going through my mind. People of a particular kind received a notice from the authorities to pack a bag, ask no questions and expect no honest answers and prepare to be resettled to a "better place. " Others, such as the disabled, who were deemed to be 'useless eaters' were consigned to a special fate early on because no one cared enough about them to protest. We have all heard the story of "and when they came for me there was no one left to stop them."

I can't believe this state has come to the point where a handful of special interests groups, commonly known as advocates and lobbyist-many of whom are paid to promote their position and/or allowed to have ethical and financial conflicts of interests, are allowed to have enough power to influence those who make the decisions that will disrupt, ruin and even destroy other's lives. God help each and everyone of us that we don't belong to a group that becomes the target of one of these 'advocates.' God help them that someone they love doesn't either

Susan Sullivan

To whom it may concern:

This letter is on the behalf of each individual that lives at Murray Center in Centralia, IL.

The 120 acres of land that Murray Center is located on, was gifted to those specifically who are in need of special services. Initially, it was a Children's Center. Through these past 40 plus years, due to the great care of staff, these same children grew up and developed into adulthood. This is their HOME. This HOME is not different than your own. A HOME is a safe haven. These individuals are unconditionally loved and cared for. Murray Center is not an institution it is a HOME. We are a family.

Murray Center is all one level/ground level which is a benefit in case of any natural disaster and it is total wheelchair accessible. It is a newer built facility. Each residence is well over 10,000 square footage of actual living area and has a open floor plan. Murray Center is its own miniature town. We have a dental office, laboratory, pharmacy, x-ray department, physical and occupational therapy, speech and hearing, day programming to enhancing living skills (cooking, horticulture, etc.), 24 hour nursing services and doctors that make daily rounds, routine check ups and specialized evaluations, dietary on grounds and on each living area which specializes in each persons individual dietary needs (brittle diabetic, tube fed individuals, chopped or regular diet, etc.) wheelchair personnel which specializes, builds and adapts, and maintains the perfect fit for each persons individual body needs, 24 maintenance personnel,

electricians, plumbers, storeroom warehouse, 24 hour security, 24 hour staff personnel which understands their specific needs and wants, psychologists, an in-ground pool, basketball courts, gardens, an activity department which provides a multitude of trips to enlighten their world, and various personnel that works with these individuals to excel, enhance, and maintain their skills. We meet each individuals need and have caring, exceptional staff.

We are their voice, their eyes and ears, their arms and legs. We provide comfort and guidance to help them sort out their problems. Many of these individuals cannot talk, feed themselves, walk, bathe or dress themselves. They cannot perform simple daily needs. Their daily needs are provided for them by familiar staff that are devoted to their care. These individuals who live at Murray are medically and behaviorally challenged and have social issues. Most have a mentality of a toddler, others are physically aggressive. Some were born with physical challenges, others were from childhood immunizations, aneurisms, lead paint, forcep delivery etc. Diagnosis' of cerebral palsy, encephalopathy, gastrostomy/jejunostomy tube, profound mental retardation, epilepsy, psychotic disorder, PICA, autism, aggressive behavior, schizophrenia are just some of the maladies these individuals are burdened with. They did not ask to be so challenged in their life, every second of the day. Each individual is unique.

They smile when someone they have known for years comes near them. They are happy in their familiar home with familiar faces. These individuals have made friends that also live here, as well as staff. These individuals will tell you that this is their HOME. We have individuals that have lived here 20 - 40 years. Over 60 individuals have lived here 40 or more years!! Consistency and stability are very important and extremely necessary to these individuals. They require 24 hour specialized, individualized care that they receive here at Murray Center. Their "community home" is Murray Center and they have been and are already a part of this community. If these individuals were able to live at home, they would. Murray Center is the best home and appropriate place for these individuals. Due to their medical or behavioral issues, they would NOT be appropriately placed in a group/community home. These types of community based homes have very few staff to supervise and have very limited qualifications and resources for our individuals. Murray Center staff have monthly and yearly training to properly care for these individuals. We ensure there is enough staff to provide the variety of care these individuals need. I agree that for some individuals, a community home would be ideal. To live "independently in a group home/community home" you have to have the mentally and physically ability to do so. Nearly all of these individuals who live at Murray Center, do not have these capabilities. These individuals who have difficulties are really blessed angels and have a guaranteed place in heaven.

There is no such thing as a "smooth transition". To move someone out of a familiar place with familiar staff that provides stability and exceptional care and into a completely unfamiliar surroundings with basically strangers will only make for needless apprehension and true vulnerability to ones well being and self. No one can really imagine how abandoned these individuals will feel or cope if this unbelievable event happens. Take a moment and sincerely realize that this could be you or happen to one of your family members. How then would you decide someone's fate?

To move these individuals out of Murray Center and into a community home would be DEVASTATING to them. They would be lost and regress emotionally, physically, mentally and any self-injurious behaviors

would escalate causing harm to themselves. Community homes will only promote unsafe conditions for any individual, which may include law enforcement involvement, jail, psychiatric wards, elopement, overmedication, unexplained injuries and possibly death. We have had individuals that were needed to be transferred back into Murray Center from group homes, etc. for behavioral, emotional, health reasons, and staffing issues. We have also had new admissions from the community and from previous closures, etc. These individuals have prospered and thrived at Murray Center. Murray Center is well known for its exceptional quality of care for its individuals since it first opened its doors.

Community homes are understaffed with non-certified personnel and underpaid employees that may or may not show up to work, leaving the people who live there unattended. There have been unreported cases of abuse, rape, and even death. Some community homes have closed because they cannot maintain the safety of the people who live there or their physical and mental challenges. Where do these people go now? Maybe live on the streets, in jail, in psychiatric hospitals, nursing homes? Is that humane? These community homes along with your local school systems, construction, transportation, various businesses, etc. have not been paid from the state what they are due.

It has been stated that the state will “save money” by transferring these individuals in a community based home at the cost of \$80,000.00 per each individual yearly. What all is included in this amount? Is it just room and board and transportation? Does it include all medical aspects, i.e., dental, prescription, behavioral, therapy services etc.? How exactly does it compare with the exceptional services that Murray Center provides? Closing these facilities who take care of the defenseless, is not the answer to the states financial problems. There is no rational explanation to close well qualified facilities, such as Murray Center, take individuals out of their homes, lose meaningful jobs and further hamper its community and economy in order to build new community homes. There is no “saving money”.

To move these individuals into a new setting would be DEVASTATING to their parents and guardians. They have entrusted Murray Center to care for their sons and daughters and family members and to make the best decisions for their care. Many of these individuals have parents well into their 70's and 80's. Very recently, a parent said that she would rather her and her son be dead than have him moved from Murray Center. What a tragic thought! Many of these individuals have family in this very area and see them regularly.

Please open your heart and mind and let these individuals remain at HOME. Let these individuals live their LIFE. Let these parents and guardians be able to keep the choices that they made and their wishes for their loved ones to continue to live at Murray Center. Do not take away their RIGHT AS A PARENT to make decisions for their own child nor take away these INDIVIDUALS RIGHTS to live a safe, healthy, happy, and rewarding life.

This has caused undue stress for the parents and guardians and the innocent individuals who live at Murray Center. These are people that live and breathe, not dollar signs. There should not be a price tag placed on a persons quality of life, health, and safety.

For those people who make derogatory statements and comments to support closures of qualified, exceptional facilities like Murray Center, especially regarding parental responsibilities on the financial aspect of a their loved one, who have special needs that live in these facilities, please show respect for others less fortunate. These families and individuals did not ask, or is at any fault for their lifes challenges. You cannot imagine or anticipate such type of occurrence.

For the people and families that have loved ones in community homes. I hope they were given a choice in that matter. I truly wish that they and their loved ones are provided great care, comfort, solace, and happiness. I hope that it is the best choice for them. For those people who want to deny those unknown faces and names a rewarding, quality of life, please consider yourself truly lucky not to have to worry about the health and safety of your loved one or being evicted from your home by strangers.

Visit Murray Center, look the individuals in their eyes, talk with the staff, see what exceptional care it offers and provides, and walk its grounds.

The proposed closing of Murray Center, will have a domino effect. The loss of home to the individuals, the loss of jobs to the employees, and the loss of community.

We have over 550 employees that work at Murray Center. Many of which drive quite a distance to work because there are no jobs in their home area. Southern Illinois is a rural area. It is composed of land acreage and small towns. There are no jobs in this area to absorb this amount of people. We have husband and wives that both work at Murray Center. Many employees have been there 5, 10, 20, 30 or more years. We choose to make a difference in someone's life who is less fortunate. We work hard to provide a satisfactory life for ourselves and children. We teach our children responsibility, to have respect for others, and to make good decisions in life. To do any job, big or small, you hope to make a difference in the world and one that will be FOR THE GOOD OF ALL.

Closing places of employment, doesn't make sense. Closing places of employment to create jobs, doesn't make sense either. Drawing unemployment is an option some people may have, but there have to be jobs available. People will be forced to apply for government programs such as, Medicaid, Public Aid and LINK food assistance to survive. This will only deepen the debt and make the budget worse.

The State has limited the funding for any college bound student. While in college, you hope that there are jobs available once you graduate. How is it expected to go to college and get a degree of "What you want to be when you grow up", when your 45 plus years of age? We are already working in our chosen field of profession. It takes a lifetime to pay for college. How can you have the money to pay for college and life's regular monthly bills with no job, especially with no available jobs in your area? NO JOBS = NO MONEY.

By proposing to close Murray Center, it will be a profound community loss as well as to its businesses. There will be no one going out to eat, which effects the restaurants. No one buying gas, which effects the gas stations. No one going to the doctors and dental offices which effects a persons health, the hospitals, and the pharmacies. No one using child care services or special classes. No one will be going to retailers or stores. No one purchasing homes or vehicles, etc. School enrollment will suffer due to

families moving out of state. Businesses will have to raise their prices in order to try to stay afloat, most likely to no avail. It will be a financial nightmare and financial ruin to all.

These statements also reflect for the announced proposed closings, which include Murphysboro Youth Home and the Centralia Animal Disease Lab, etc. These places were also approved to be built and to serve the people in their areas. Please find alternate ways to reduce the states debt, than to affect peoples lives, their quality of life, and livelihoods.

I ask that you delve down deep, have compassion, and consider the lives and futures that would be lost, emotionally, physically and financially.

The Perkins Family
Marion County, IL

To Whom It May Concern:

I am sending this e-mail in response to the proposed closure of the Warren G. Murray Center, Centralia, IL. The Murray Center is one of few facilities left in Illinois that provides intensive intervention and treatment for those citizens (especially in the southern Illinois region) diagnosed with intellectual, emotional, physical disabilities, and sometimes, a combination of these disabilities. The caregivers at this facility have worked hard over the years to provide excellent care for these individuals who are often unwanted by family, as well as in the community. The staff at Murray Center focuses on what these individuals can do (their possibilities) rather than on what they cannot do (their disabilities), thus, helping them to live more productive lives and not as institutionalized beings who have no opportunity (ies) to make a contribution. I am aware that the Murray Center provided a woman who is blind and diagnosed with an Intellectual Disability with excellent intervention and care. If not for the OIG and Murray Center, this individual would probably be homeless.

I realize the residents of the Murray Center are often viewed by lawmakers and others as those who always take from society rather than give back or contribute. However, the State of IL made a promise back in the 60's to provide care and services for its' citizens experiencing Mental and Intellectual Disabilities. Out in the community, most persons have very little to no knowledge of these disorders or how to care for those who do.

The opinions of the citizens of Illinois are often discounted as much as the respect for the residents of Murray Center. I hope the State will seriously reconsider its' position regarding the closure of this facility which will not only hurt the residents but also those employed by the facility and the community of Centralia.

Sincerely,

Kellene M. Hamilton

As an Illinois resident I am writing to ask you to protect funding for the Murray Center in Centralia as you develop funding plans for next year.

I understand you have tough decisions to make about Illinois spending. However, it's necessary to protect the persons who are very obviously unable to care for themselves.

Let's not balance the budget on the backs of those who obviously need our help.

Simply put, if you decide to close the Murray Center, you are duty bound to offer an alternative that is truly acceptable to all affected.

Thank you,

Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Thiems
28 Red Oak Dr.
Highland, IL 62249

Please do all you can to save our son Mike home there at the Murray Center. He has been there ten years. He was moved from LDC in Lincoln. He could never function in community home. He done so well there. The people are so good to him. They show so much kindness to him and to us. He has learn so much more there even tho he can't speak. He has made friends there. they are so happy to be with each other. The center has so many fun things they do with the kids. The help provide much more then their care. They bring toys and treats, clothing. Their hearts are with those kids. Centraia is very compassionate town. We never seen people so willing to help our son. thank you to all those who work at the center. May God bless them and their families. Help Illinois Retarded keep Murray Center. The emotional strain on our families is unbearable without all this. Thank you. May God help you protect these lovable children do justice for them.

Midge Pence,

Dear Commission Members,

I am writung in support of Murray Center remaing open and fully funded. Its the morally right thing for the residents, the employees, and a severely economically devastated town and surrounding area. Pls. do not let the governor evict 275 innocent residents of the city of Centralia. Marion county in which the bulk of the city of Centralia lies has a un-emploment rate hovering around 12% We just can not take another hit. Thank you and I pra the Lord will guide your hearts to do the right thing and keep Murray open.

Sincerely,
Charles A. Fisher

Please do right thing keep Murray Center open.Befor you do anything go spend the day with our son.Talk with the care givers you see how caring they are for him.Mike now knows the building,his room,where to shower and eat.He has his best friends there. We need a governor to care about the people of Illinois.What happens to you people when you get in the offices of state? New buildings built in Lincoln never used and heat and care for empty buildings.Do what is right fot the retarded.

Midge Pence

Dear Sirs and Madams,

You are planning to ask these residents where they would like to live? Murray Center is where they live and have lived there for years. They are not mistreated and receive care from a wonderful staff.

You are planning to ask these residents where they would like to live? A communal home with others like them, a foster home, etc. when they do not speak and cannot walk and are incontinent. You think they can give you an answer?

How much does Murray Center cost the state of Illinois? How much is the commission receiving from the state of Illinois for your work? Is the Arlington Racetrack more important with new housing for the horses and jockeys?

Yours truly,

Jacqueline Bainter

324 Hazel Ave.

Belleville, IL 62223

Governor Patrick Quinn:

I am writing expressing my opposition to the closure of Warren G. Murray Development Center in Centralia. As you know, the Center is a home to over 200 residents and provides peace of mind for their families. The residents get care that they will not receive at any other facility. Some of its residents have called Murray Center their home for over forty years. Kicking them out of their home would not be right. This Center is known in the area for having superb staff that is dedicated to taking care of its residents. In total, Warren G. Murray Development Center provides 600 people from the area with jobs. This injects a \$38.1 million dollar payroll into our economy. Unemployment in Illinois is already at an all time high, closing the Center would just leave more people jobless. Closing Murray center would not solve the budget dilemma because Murray center adds to the economic stability of the region. Knowing the importance of the center, I hope that you will consider other alternatives to address the budget problem.

Sincerely,
Maria Petty