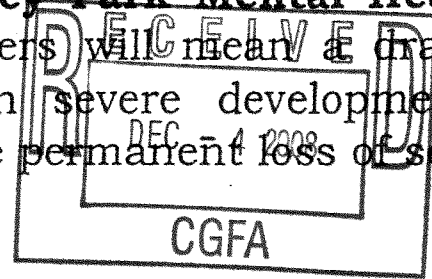


The Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability received petitions containing over 5,800 signatures. A sample of these petitions follows on the next few pages. Actual petitions are part of the public record and will be held on file at the Commission's office.

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, oppose the closure of the **Howe Developmental Center and the Tinley Park Mental Health Center**. The loss of these two centers will mean a drastic reduction in services for those with severe developmental disabilities and mental illness—and the permanent loss of some 800 jobs—in the south suburban area.



Name	Address	Phone number
<u>Marilyn Chapman</u>	<u>16411 S. Francis Dr</u>	<u>708-460-8618</u>
<u>Deborah A. Hunt</u>	<u>314 Violet Lane Bryn Mawr, IL</u>	<u>630-406-6118</u>
<u>Grace Strzelczyk</u>	<u>860 Checker Dr Buffalo Grove, IL</u>	<u>847-454-5476</u>
<u>Theresa Strzelczyk</u>	<u>560 Checker Dr Buffalo Grove, IL 60089</u>	<u>847-459-5476</u>
<u>John Stupyl</u>	<u>314 Violet Lane Bryn Mawr, IL 60510</u>	<u>630-406-6118</u>
<u>John Stupyl</u>	<u>860 Checker Dr Buffalo Grove, IL 60089</u>	<u>630-841-3601</u>
<u>Monica Wehman</u>	<u>12 Old Creek Rd Palos Park, IL 60464</u>	<u>708-448-5778</u>
<u>Waggoner</u>	<u>7800 McARTY RD. PALOS HEIGHTS, IL</u>	<u>708 448-0812</u>
<u>Irma Becker</u>	<u>12043 Harold Ave Palos Heights, IL</u>	
<u>Susan Gilmier</u>	<u>10620 So. Lawler Oak Lawn, IL 60453</u>	<u>708-636-6746</u>
<u>Shirley Khoury</u>	<u>6802 av. 109th St. North, IL</u>	<u>708-448-8433</u>
<u>Adrian M. Bohne</u>	<u>6351 W. 125th St. Palos Heights, IL</u>	<u>708-388-4460</u>

Return to Betty Turturillo, Howe Family & Friends Association  
8307 Aspen Lane, Tinley Park, IL 60477-8291

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, oppose the closure of the **Howe Developmental Center and the Tinley Park Mental Health Center**. The loss of these two centers will mean a drastic reduction in services for those with severe developmental disabilities and mental illness—and the permanent loss of some 800 jobs—in the south suburban area.

Name	Address	Phone number
Paul E. Klein	6420 W. 124th St. Palos Hts. IL	(708) 389-8425
Nelma Dreier	9040 So. 87th Ave. Hickory Hills 60457	708-598-1736
Kate Brett	6031 W. 123rd St. Palos	(708) 396-0137
Renee Lave	12618 So. MASSASOIT Palos Hts	708-388-0432
Tim Pearson	10208 S. KOSTNER Oak Lawn	708 423 3785
Jim W. A.	464 Shadow Creek P.O. Hight IL	
Charles Kront	7464 CASHEW DRIVE ORLAND PARK, IL 60462	(708) 444-1154
Debra A. Neff	7513 CASHEW DR. (708) ORLAND PARK IL	444-0486
Jim W. A.	7513 Cashew Dr 708 Orland Park IL	444-0486
Mike Will	7459 CASHEW ORLAND PARK IL	708 532-4116
Eric R.	7459 CASHEW ORLAND PARK IL	708 532-4116
Debra A. Will	7459 Cashew Dr Orland Park, IL	708 532-4116

Return to Betty Turturillo, Howe Family & Friends Association  
8307 Aspen Lane, Tinley Park, IL 60477-8291

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, oppose the closure of the **Howe Developmental Center and the Tinley Park Mental Health Center**. The loss of these two centers will mean a drastic reduction in services for those with severe developmental disabilities and mental illness—and the permanent loss of some 800 jobs—in the south suburban area.

Name	Address	Phone number
Brad Vock	7417 Cashew Drive	(708) 535-6157
Carl Nimitz	15657 Calypso	708 614-1635
Mary Nimitz	15657 Calypso	708 614-1635
Sandra Atchison	15643 Calypso	708 214 2923
Richard Atchison	15643 Calypso	708 532 7750
David Mikula	15635 Calypso	708 633 7785
Al Del Pino	16136 Paxton	
Cheryl Harris	15627 Calypso Ln	ORLAND PARK
JASON SKRECK	15613 CALYPSO LN	ORLAND PARK
GLADYS GARUCKAS	15614 CALYPSO LN	ORLAND PARK
STEVE GARUCKAS	8924 169TH ST	ORLAND HILLS
Janet Pluta	15607 Calypso Lane	Orland Park

Return to Betty Turturillo, Howe Family & Friends Association  
8307 Aspen Lane, Tinley Park, IL 60477-8291

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, oppose the closure of the **Howe Developmental Center and the Tinley Park Mental Health Center**. The loss of these two centers will mean a drastic reduction in services for those with severe developmental disabilities and mental illness—and the permanent loss of some 800 jobs—in the south suburban area.

Name

Address

Phone number

Caryl Roltz	17239-70 Ave Tinley Park I	
John Roltz	17239 70 <sup>th</sup> Ave Tinley Park, IL	
Danny C. Wngt	7313 W. CASHWEN	708 638 21
Jasmine Bernard	7465 CASHWEN DR.	713-484-5716
Karen KROUT	6218 Laura Lane	708 532 0600
Granna Delaniero	7453 Cashew Drive	Orland
Rafael MAREMILLO	7453 Cashew Drive	Orland
Albert J. J. J.	7445 CASHWEN DR.	Orland
Michael J. O'Leary	7437 CASHWEN DR.	ORLAND PK, IL
Josephine Cavanaugh	7423 Cashew Dr.	Orland PK IL
Robert Cavanaugh	7423 Cashew Dr.	Orland PK IL
Brad Wgh	7411 CASHWEN Drive	ORLAND PK

Return to Betty Turturillo, Howe Family & Friends Association  
8307 Aspen Lane, Tinley Park, IL 60477-8291

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, oppose the closure of the **Howe Developmental Center and the Tinley Park Mental Health Center**. The loss of these two centers will mean a drastic reduction in services for those with severe developmental disabilities and mental illness—and the permanent loss of some 800 jobs—in the south suburban area.

Name

Address

Phone number

Reddy	15539 Calypso, Orland Park	60462
Mutual Bank	15531 Calypso Orland Park	60462
Joe Molnar	15544 Calypso, Orland Park	60462
Deb Molnar	15544 Calypso Orland Park	60462
Janni Nuch	15558 Calypso Orland Park	60462
James Neal	15558 Calypso Orland Park	60462
Angie Nicola	15558 Calypso Orland Park	60462
Mike Nicols	15558 Calypso Ln. Orland Park	60462
Julie Nicola	15558 Calypso Ln. Orland Park	
Sara Bepko	155604 Heather Ct Orland Park	60462
Unimur Ali	15600 Calypso lane	708-467-8510
Tara Chaudhary	15600 Calypso lane	708-467-8510

Return to Betty Turturillo, Howe Family & Friends Association  
8307 Aspen Lane, Tinley Park, IL 60477-8291

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, oppose the closure of the **Howe Developmental Center and the Tinley Park Mental Health Center**. The loss of these two centers will mean a drastic reduction in services for those with severe developmental disabilities and mental illness—and the permanent loss of some 800 jobs—in the south suburban area.

Name

Address

Phone number

Laura Colella 320 Pinehurst Ct  
Palms Heights

Joy Auser 8711 W. 170th St.  
Orland Park, IL

Adrian Handgrave 6309 W. 93rd St.  
Oak Lawn, IL

Joseph D. Rogers Crestwood, Ill.

Sandra Collins 13649 Elm Ct, Lemont, IL

Carol Glavin 10445 S. Mansfield Ave, Oak Lawn, IL 60453

Dolores Rennis 2 Cam Caravelle Palms Hills  
60465

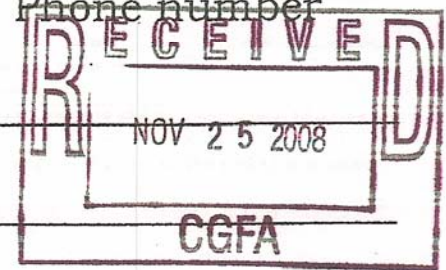
my marasovich 14213 Creek Crossing Dr. Orland Park, IL 60466

Theresa P. Blum 6820 W. 129th St Palms Heights

Carole Peterson 5534 Fairway Crestwood, IL 6009

Cheryl Davidovich 3148 149th St. Oak Forest, IL 60451

Marjorie Hultgen 12532 S. 73 Ave. Palms Hills, IL



Return to Betty Turturillo, Howe Family & Friends Association  
8307 Aspen Lane, Tinley Park, IL 60477-8291

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, oppose the closure of the **Howe Developmental Center and the Tinley Park Mental Health Center**. The loss of these two centers will mean a drastic reduction in services for those with severe developmental disabilities and mental illness—and the permanent loss of some 800 jobs—in the south suburban area.

Name	Address	Phone number
<del>Joan Kuronaka</del>	<del>85 Parliament Dr E</del>	<del>708-448-0693</del>
Joan Kuronaka	85 Parliament Dr E ORLAND PARK	708-448-0693
Steve O'Donnell	13666 S. 85 Ave	708-460-1548
Lail Bempuk	12320 Hobart Palos Park, IL	60464
Helga Fuller	12958 S. 85 Ave Palos Park, IL	60464
Hersa Burkema	15140 K. PATRICK ORLAND PARK, IL	60464
Debbie Kringerson	116 Whispering Lake Dr P.O. Box 60464 IL	60464
Moukha Korallies	601 S. 85 Ave Palos Park, IL	60464
Raymond Borne	12212 79th Ave Palos Hills, IL	60464
Mark Koubler	7857 Fair Lane Burr Ridge, IL	60464
Gina Best	10570 S. 85 Ave Palos Park, IL	60464
Mike Kaut	7464 Coshow Dr Orland Park, IL	60464

Return to Betty Turturillo, Howe Family & Friends Association  
8307 Aspen Lane, Tinley Park, IL 60477-8291

✓  
WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, oppose the closure of the **Howe Developmental Center and the Tinley Park Mental Health Center**. The loss of these two centers will mean a drastic reduction in services for those with severe developmental disabilities and mental illness—and the permanent loss of some 800 jobs—in the south suburban area.

Name	Address	Phone number
G. HAIGIS	11912 92 <sup>nd</sup> AVE PALOS PARK IL	708-448-2623
M. SHELTON	16260 S. ROSEMARIE LOCKPORT, IL.	815-306260
R. Prieto	989 W Savannah Dr Romeoville IL	60446 (815) 856-0976
J. Liorgeth	14533 MALLARD LN HOMER GLEN IL	60491 (708) 301-8719
Stan Giertych	13530 Haggard St Homer Glen Ill	60491 (708) 301-989
J. S. Pidik	2527 W 127TH ST BLUE ISLANDS IL	60406 (708) 371-4828
LAZAR	STOIA 16 W 071 91st Hinsdale IL	60527 (630) 325-6693
ZDZISLAW JURCAU	8520 S. NATCHIEZ BURBANK IL	60459 708 549-4277
Johnas Oproch	5844 W 76 ST BURBANK IL	60459 708 438-2228
VERZY MILEVSKI	6630 W. 92ND ST OAK LAWN IL	60455 708 430 5711
Steve Schilling	8232 S. 85th Ave Justice IL	60458 (815) 762-7393
JOHN NETHAWAT	2437 HIGH ST BLUE ISLAND IL	60406 (708) 813-8344

Return to Betty Turturillo, Howe Family & Friends Association  
8307 Aspen Lane, Tinley Park, IL 60477-8291

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, oppose the closure of the **Howe Developmental Center and the Tinley Park Mental Health Center**. The loss of these two centers will mean a drastic reduction in services for those with severe developmental disabilities and mental illness—and the permanent loss of some 800 jobs—in the south suburban area.

Name

Address

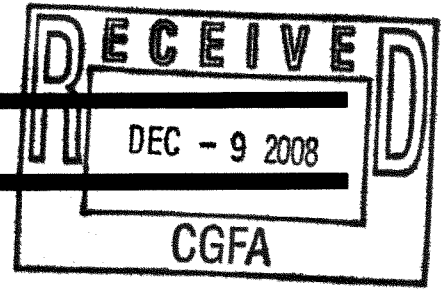
Phone number

Name	Address	Phone number
Brendt Stewenson	7655 White Pine Pl.	(708) 532-5069
Shirley Phillips	16005 Pine Drive, Tinley Park	(708) 532-5069
Christopher Habeck	8137 W 129th St. Palos Park, Ill.	708.403.0480
Rosemary Jule	8965 Silverdale, Orland Park, Ill	815/458-6942
Nancy Galatte	508 N. Washington Braidwood, IL	
Janet Elmer	6300 W. 124th St. Palos Heights, IL	60463
Jan Nelson	7442 W. Manitoba Dr. Palos Heights, IL	60463
Kim M. Cobley	7832 Garden Lane Justice, Ill	60458
Deanna Wachholz	27 Country Square Ct Palos Heights, IL	60463
Mural Petersen	26 W Maple Ln. Palos Heights, IL	60463
Joyce Danista	14331 Dawnwood Homer Glen, IL	60463
Marie Adamek	6237 W. 125th St. Palos Heights, IL	60463

Return to Betty Turturillo, Howe Family & Friends Association  
8307 Aspen Lane, Tinley Park, IL 60477-8291



# Village of Richton Park



RICHARD REINBOLD  
Village President

BENJAMIN HUGHES  
Village Trustee

CYNTHIA BUTLER  
Village Trustee

STEVEN DUDLEY  
Village Trustee

VALERIE BABKA  
Village Trustee

SHARON D. KRIHA  
Village Trustee

HARRY OLSON  
Village Trustee

MARY E. PIERCE  
Village Clerk

State Senator Jeffrey M. Schoenberg  
State Representative Richard P. Myers  
Co-Chairmen

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

12-5-08

Dear Senator Schoenberg and Representative Myers,

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed closure of Howe Developmental Center and Tinley Park Mental Health Center. Both of these facilities provide vital services to Richton Park and the rest of the Southland area.

The fact is that there are no comparable alternatives to providing care in the south suburbs for individuals with mental health crises or high need developmental disabilities. Without the safety net provide by these facilities, many individuals will be lost to homelessness and incarceration. Others will be removed far from their families or will receive inadequate care.

In addition, closure would mean the loss of 800 jobs with decent wages, pensions, and health benefits. This would be a severe economic blow to our area, one we are especially unable to afford in the current recession.

Sincerely,

Rick Reinbold  
Village President

From: norma\_bernsee@grayhill.com [mailto:norma\_bernsee@grayhill.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, December 09, 2008 3:04 PM  
To: webmastercgfa  
Subject: Why the importance about Howe Ctr...

Dear Sirs or whoever this may concern:

I am sure you have been aware about the possible closing of Howe Center in Tinley Park. I am hoping you will reconsider and think deeply about your decision and that you will know the facts behind the real estate developmental property that sits there, awaiting a bulldozing disaster.

My husband and I are guardians of my sister in law who resides there in Unit 406. She has profound severe mental retardation and 24/7 needs.

She first lived in Lincoln in 1979, was sent there as an adoscolent whe her father served our country in the air force.

He and my mother in law had to make that difficult decision when their daughter was 12 years old..her autism also made her hurtful to herself and others.

I came into the fmaily as her sister in law 21 years ago...and I would go for the visits as well.

From my view, Lincoln was nowhere close to how Howe Center is.

Lincoln was more of an insitution that made me feel like the people were (and I use this term respectfully to the residents) "disorderly" and workers alike...they were numbers and our visits were very unpleasant.

My husband and I became her guardian when Donna's mother passed away . When Lincoln also started having their issues and not being re-certified, DONna was slowly moved to Howe Center.They advised us she would be better ina smaller envirnment group home setting.I signed paperwork and took their advice.

It was the best decision LIncoln made for us.

We were reluctant to visiting and waited a few years. We do feel terrible we expected the same type of setting and we had avoided going because Donna wasnt even aware who we were. How wrong we were. She lives with 9 ladies and the unit is like a little cottage home setting.

We never need to make an appt to visit and the staff is so kind and we know most of them by name.They know her personality on a one on one basis.

The ladies have their meals in their dining room,they have 2 ladies per bedroom and several bathrooms.The living room is so nicely set up with plenty of sitting space for visitors as well.

The outdoors area is like a subdivision in itself. You always see everyone smiling and walking about like a family.

During all of this to take place, if Howe closes, we are still waiting replies where we cna place my sister in law...there is a waiting list and we dont want her placed just anywhere.

It would be nice to have her closer to us or for us to bring her home but that is not possible because of her needs.

I feel that her father gave 25 years service to our country, as a sgt also, we owe this to his daughter and all the residents there as well.

ALot of these residents are older also. How do we ignore their needs and dignity.

Please look at the positives of Howe Center, dont listen to the made up stories..sure there will be errors, but that is bcause sometimes they have been under staffed. get good management that cna keep up with everything so they cna always be re-certified.

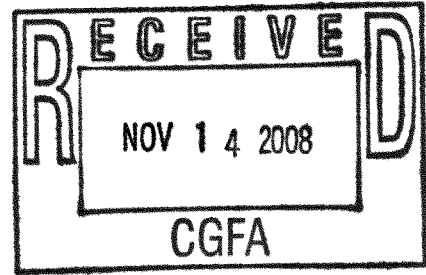
Thank you for reading my letter.

Happy Holidays,  
Sincerely,

Norma Bernsee

November 2008

Commission on Government Forecasting  
and Accountability  
703 Stratton Ofc. Bldg.  
Springfield, Il. 62706



Attn: Executive Director  
Dan R. Long

*It behoves me greatly that the State of Illinois is rated at the very bottom of the states, when it comes to financial support for the mentally handicapped.*

*My sister, Willa A. Neugebauer, has been at the Linley Park Mental Health Center for over 25 years; previously was at Dixon, Ill. for almost the same amount of time. She is severely handicapped, and needs constant attention. She has been very content and well treated at the Howe Center. For her to relocate to another facility would be a traumatic disturbance in her life style.*

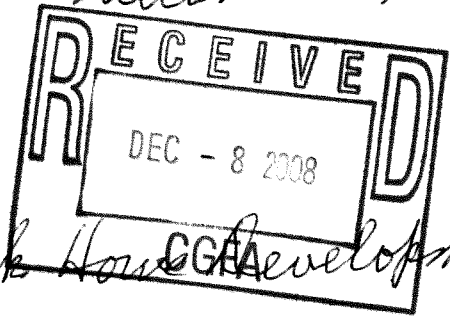
*I ask for your approval that Howe be retained and not closed.*

*Sincerely*

*John Neugebauer*

Mr. & Mrs. John Neugebauer  
8640 Waukegan Road #326  
Morton Grove, IL 60053

December 3, 2008



Dear Mr. Hong,

Re: Let's keep Tinley Park Home Development Center open.

Howe is the newest and nicest Campus in the State of Illinois and was designed for the developmentally disabled individuals. The homes on these grounds are beautiful. It would be a shame to tear them down for commercial development. Residents are in the best home that meets all their needs, be it medical, psychological, dietary, physical therapy, etc.

It is only a money game.

Howe has lost its accreditation due to management inadequacies which were caused by lack of state funding and the loss of Medicaid. Whatever problems exist were allowed to happen so Howe could be closed.

The administration said it will "re-distribute" most of the residents to other state-operated developmental centers. This will be very traumatic for the residents who have come to know this as their home for many years.

- IDHS says it will transfer 100 residents to community based agencies. The community based agencies only rarely are capable of serving individuals with complex needs that are provided right on

the campus at Howe Center.

The Community is not ready for so many people and they will be scrambling to open new homes and hire people for near minimum wages. Community provided funds are also being cut.

What ever problems exist at Howe Center can be fixed.

The time of action is now.

Very truly yours,

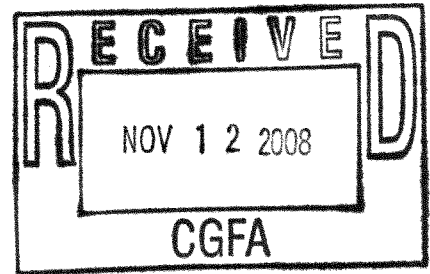
Gerald J. LaPorte, #409  
3303 S. Grove Ave.  
Berwyn, IL 60402

Cc: Senator Durbin  
Governor Blagojevich

November 2008

Commission on Government Forecasting  
and Accountability  
703 Stratton Ofc. Bldg.  
Springfield, Il. 62706

Attn: Executive Director  
Dan R. Long



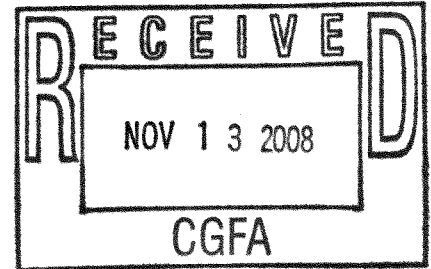
Please Keep Howe Center open.  
My daughter has received good  
care and needs the medical  
care that Howe provides.

Linda Brown  
608 Cherrywood Dr  
North Aurora, IL 60542

630-892-3834

November 2008

Commission on Government Forecasting  
and Accountability  
703 Stratton Ofc. Bldg.  
Springfield, Il. 62706



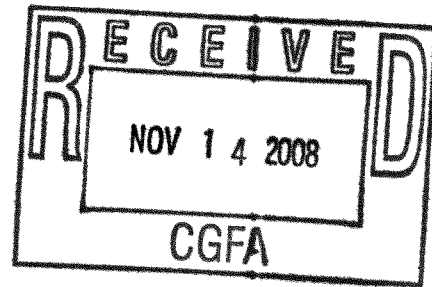
Attn: Executive Director  
Dan R. Long

To whom it may concern: I am very disappointed on the closing of Home. I think it is one of the best facility and clean. They have always a variety of things to do for these adult. It is a safe and comfortable place for my son. He has overcome so many problems. To close this facility would be a terrible disgrace to all families and adults that reside here. They are happy. We are happy. Please I ask do not shut down a wonderful place for these people. To displace them would be the hardest transition for them. Changes are very hard and tragic for this adult. They will be taken away from people staff, friend and to them this is there own private community where they can thrive without ridicule and with respect and love. I plea please help us keep Home open. Thank You

My Son resides at Home  
MICHAEL TORRES (501)

Josephine Torres

November 18, 2008



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

Executive Director Dan R. Long,

My niece, Angelique, has lived at Howe Center for nineteen years. She is forty six years old and profoundly retarded. She has a g-tube for feeding, is non-verbal, wears diapers, and has severe medical problems including terminal cancer.

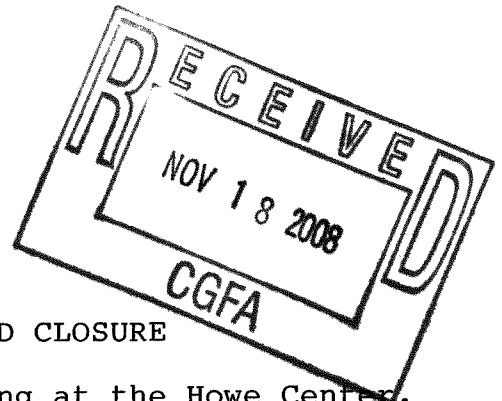
My sister has been looking for community placement for her daughter, but none seems to be available. At Howe Center Angel is close to her mother, grandma, aunts, uncles and cousins. She enjoys a good relationship with her family and Howe Center provides the quality of care that she needs. When her cancer came back in 2005, the doctor gave her six months to two years to live. Moving her will jeopardize not only the length of her life but the quality of her life.

Sincerely,

*Bruce & Marianne Richards*

November 15, 2008

Dan R. Long, Executive Director  
Commission on Government  
Forecasting and Accountability  
708 Stratton Ofc. Building  
Springfield, Il. 62706



RE: HOWE DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER RECOMMENDED CLOSURE

We, the guardians of the individuals living at the Howe Center, are very concerned about the recommendation to close the center.

Howe Center is one of the newest State of Illinois Developmental Centers which was built expressly for the people who live there and opened in 1974. The individual homes are modern and handicapped accessible throughout.

The reasons we have been given for closure do not make sense to us. We do know the national trend is to move all developmentally disabled people to the community. We also know Howe Center sits on valuable property. That should not be the reason to put lives in jeopardy as we know it will for many of the individuals at Howe. Many of them will not be able to withstand the move. Severe trauma to some may even cause death. This is a known fact. The Olmstead Act says living in a State operated facility is a viable choice. Many of the individuals who have lived at Howe for many years do not want to move, their friends are there including staff and other guardians who visit.

The last few words of the Notice of Closure sent to CGFA on September 5, 2008 states "are in the best interest of the state". Where is the best interest of the individuals who live at Howe Center?

They are our primary concern and should be that of the state. They are Illinois citizens, our most vulnerable citizens, and their life and choice should be considered first. A move will be very difficult for many of them and the risk is too great.

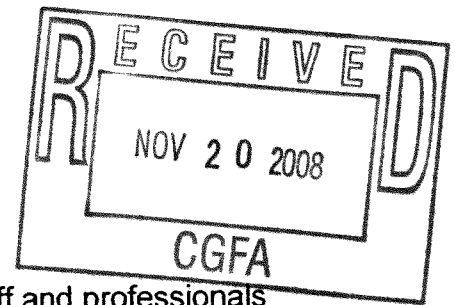
This is also very stressful for their guardians, as some of their loved ones may be moved further away from them. This is harmful to everyone.

With a strong committed administration and accountability, Howe Center could be taken back to where it was in the past, a State of the Art Facility.

Howe Center should remain open.

*Betty Turturillo*  
Betty Turturillo, President  
Howe Family and Friends Association

November 17, 2008



This letter is being sent on behalf of myself and many of the staff and professionals working at Howe Center in Tinley Park (*not the Howe Developmental Center, as it's been erroneously called*). Now that the media trash-talking and Equip for Equality has slowed down their rampage, and in spite of the fact that no one from Howe, or anyone representing Howe, has defended what we do or rebutted what's been said, you may want to hear another side. I have been blessed in so many ways while working here. One of the most important being that I have earned the trust and respect of many of my co-workers, the individuals living here and their guardians and family members. This letter is a product of some of the conversations we've had over the past few months. My purpose is to take some of the concerns and issues that we have and put them out there -- not because we think this is going to keep Howe up and running, but because management has put all of us in a position where we just need someone to listen to us. There are some issues with employees and with staff working directly with our individuals -- but, where can you go where there aren't? We're not perfect; our individuals (*they are not patients*) are not perfect. If you need issues or if you need to know where the problems lie, you don't need to go far, just head on over to the Administration Building. If you do a little research, you will discover that Howe used to be top of the line in this field. Other facilities, state-wide, would call on Howe to help them resolve issues and bring them up to Howe's standards -- we met and exceeded state and federal requirements. We were the best! In a matter of only a few years, we have suddenly landed at the bottom of the barrel. Why? Simple -- administration; or lack of.

We're sending this letter because we strongly feel the need to stand up for the many people who are not capable of standing up for themselves. This is one of the most special populations our nation has. They are loving, sweet "children" in the bodies and with the years of much older individuals.

In the past few years -- really since about 2001, the administration at Howe has changed hands at least 4 times. In that time, we were told that they were here to help us get re-certified. No real effort has been made to that end. Small, insignificant changes were made -- more for superficial reasons than an honest effort to move forward. It is the belief of most staff that the people in charge during this time were actually sent to close us down. Why? Because of the land. The incompetence from top level management was felt all the way down the ladder. Professionals and direct support staff cannot be blamed for any of the problems that Howe has encountered. If you do not have the essential leadership and guidance that's needed to operate, how are you supposed to be successful? The staff that work at Howe, for the most part, are the cream of the crop. Without guidance, they are left to fend for themselves and try to do their jobs in the best, most compassionate way possible. When issues arise -- as they do everywhere -- they are presented to this administration, just as policy dictates. When management turns a deaf ear, passes it off with "...We'll look into it ..." or sweeps it

under the rug -- how is this the fault of the staff? Instead of leading, guiding and holding the right people accountable -- management is in this for two things -- power and money.

Equip for Equality is good at providing statistics on how bad everything is here. I'd like to know what the statistics are for the people who have already been discharged into the community. How about dredging up the numbers on all of our people who have left in just the past 10 years? Where are they? How are they? How many are out on the streets today, or in prison? How many have been locked in a mental institution, or put into nursing homes? How many have been hurt, molested or raped? How many have gotten sick or passed away? What would the number be if I wanted to know how many of these men and women are just unaccounted for; maybe they just "got lost in the system"? It may well be cheaper to move them out of Howe (*which by the way is a facility, not an institution*), but community homes are also facing more budget cuts, staff turn over is huge, medical staff, etc are not on hand 24/7. Our people need these services to ensure their welfare every day. Is the Governor going to take care of them? His record of budget cuts says otherwise.

The current facility director has never even been to any of the homes here to see what goes on, to see how staff take care of the men and women living here, to see the compassion, patience and love they experience every day from the staff who know them best. Most staff take care of them, and have for years, as if they were their own children. Can that be done in the community? Who's going to build the homes necessary to take care of them? Who's going to take care of the homes? Who's going to want these homes built in their own neighborhoods? What happens after Howe closes; who will Equip for Equality target next?

What's up with wanting our ladies and gentlemen in community homes? They are living in homes right now. They are living in a community right now. They have one roommate in a five bedroom home; there is a kitchen, dining room, living room, laundry room. There is a gymnasium, pool, greenhouse, gazebo, snack shop, lots of grass, lots of trees. Are they going to have all of this when they leave here? Not from what we've seen and heard.

What about the babies being born today with severe physical and mental disabilities? What about the young people who are close to aging out of the homes they're in now? Is closing our facilities going to make these issues go away? These individuals -- young and old -- are always going to be here. For the people living at Howe, we are a family. The direct support staff and the professionals who work with them every day are the only constant in their lives; certainly not the administration and not the people who sit in their fancy offices, making choices for people they don't even know. It seems as if our population is more of an embarrassment than anything. Let's just spread them around and maybe they won't be quite so noticeable. I have seen first hand how people who are employed here, but who have never worked directly with this population, look at our men and ladies -- it's almost as if they're afraid of "catching" something. They don't want them in their buildings, because they may disrupt their cozy little world. What they don't

seem to realize is that there will always be a need for Howe and the people that work here; it's our people who live here who made it possible for them to have their jobs in the first place.

The solution is simple. Get rid of all upper level management. Put someone in who actually knows what it takes to take care of our people. It's been done in the past, it can be done again. Give us someone who cares, both about the staff, the individuals and their families. Give us someone who will actually listen to staff and professionals; they are the ones who have so much to offer because they are the ones who work directly with our men and ladies. There is a special bond between our staff and our guardians. The guardians need us to be here; they need to know that their loved one is being given the best care possible. This will not happen if Howe closes its doors to the most vulnerable people in our society. We know that the stories that are being put in the newspapers and on-line are seriously exaggerated; we want others to know.

Why can't the government pay more attention to Centers like Howe and put the funds to use by bringing it up to the standards they expect for themselves? Bring it up to more modern standards and give these wonderful people and their families what they deserve and not what some group perceives to be what's best for them. If the land needs to be sold, there's plenty of it around the entire perimeter. Howe could become what it should be, a state-of-the-art facility, possibly in a gated community type atmosphere. Many of our people should not have lived as long as they have; many have outlived their own parents and guardians (*who are now elderly; and unable to relocate in order to be closer to their child*). They should not have to be uprooted; future generations facing these same difficulties should not have to suffer because there is no place for their loved ones to go when there is a need.

Another statistic that Equip for Equality has used is that there are now over 14,000 people waiting for services. We're betting the majority are in the mental health field. What is Equip for Equality planning for them? They are the forgotten ones; they are the ones that need a place like Howe; they are the ones who deserve a safe, caring environment. The type of environment and caring that Howe Center has always provided.

I believe that many of Howe's employees, as well as the people who live here have somewhat blindly accepted and believed that the "system", like a wise and caring parent, would guide and assist us in our time of need. By the time we realized how badly the newest Administrator was doing, he was gone. We were lulled into a false sense of security, thinking that the next "new" person would finally listen, would finally guide us and work with us to get re-certified. This belief was the beginning of a long, slow crumble for all of us who have made Howe our 2<sup>nd</sup> home; those of us who were honored to be able to work with such a special population.

In spite of what's being said in the media, I know that I -- and 95% of my coworkers -- would never work in a place knowing that neglectful, abusive situations were occurring. We would never tolerate this by keeping quiet. There have been isolated incidents that

rightfully should have been corrected when they happened. If they weren't -- again, it's because management neglected to do their job and instead chose to turn their backs until it was too late to rectify.

Here are some interesting statistics; Howe is scheduled to close at the end of this fiscal year. Did you know that of Howe's top upper level management people, one will just go back to his former job; one is supposed to retire in September, one in October and one in December? How convenient is that? This is another reason why they don't care what happens.

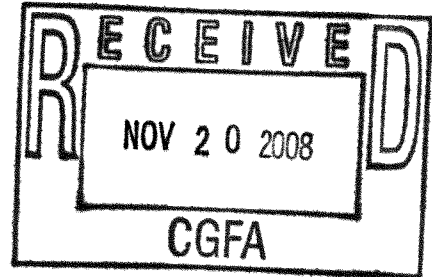
Another interesting fact; many of the direct support staff that work at Howe could have retired already, especially in light of the years of threats to close our doors. They chose to stay because they love their job; they love what they do because they are good at it; they love the people who live here and they know they are making a huge difference in the lives of every one of the men and women living here. How often do you hear that?

Again, we're not reaching out to you because we think you can fix this. We just need to express our feelings and hopefully have someone listen.

Thank you for your time.

*Joel Stanton*

SUSAN J. CHRISTENSEN  
8 COUR D' ALENE  
PALOS HILLS, IL 60477  
708/974-0148



November 14, 2008

Dan R. Long, Executive Director  
Illinois Commission on Government  
Forecasting & Accounting  
703 Stranton Office Bldg.  
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Mr. Long:

I have worked at Howe Center in Tinley Park for almost 20 years. This facility, despite what outsiders allege, is well maintained and the individuals get very good care. Each resident is treated with respect and dignity no matter how profoundly disabled. Staff take personal interest, volunteering their own time and money when necessary. The food and services provided are excellent.

In the past, individuals who moved into community homes have returned to Howe because they were not ready to leave. All of our clients have maladaptive behaviors that community homes cannot nor do not want to deal with.

The residents are use to their present environment and have forged strong bonds with peers and staff. It would be a tremendous setback, especially for individuals who are autistic, blind, etc., to move to other locations. The adjustment would be very hard for them, if not impossible, and may even cause some individuals to deteriorate. It would also be an imposition for the guardians who will have to travel long distances to see their wards and may not be able to see them at all.

I ask that consideration be given to keeping Howe Center open in order to appropriately place the people who are able to move into the community and, for those who are not able, to make transition to other facilities as smooth as possible.

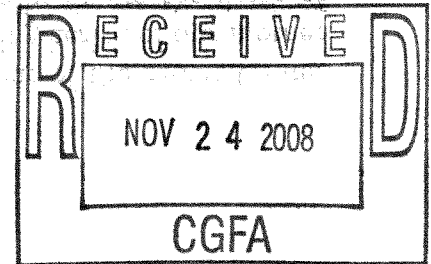
Sincerely,

Susan J. Christensen

DONALD E. JOHNSON  
3150 HICKORY RD.  
HOMewood, ILLINOIS 60430  
708-798-5106

November 18, 2008

Commission On Government  
Forecasting And Accountability  
Co-Chairmen Senator Schoenberg and  
Representative Myers  
703 Stratton Office Building  
Springfield, IL 62706



Re: Howe Center - Tinley Park, Illinois

Dear Chairmen:

I am the guardian and brother of Christine Johnson, a resident of the Howe Center since the mid 1980s, where she was placed due to the deteriorating health of our mother from Parkinson's disease. I became Christine's guardian recently, due to the death of our father. I moved back to the South Suburbs of Chicago in order to allow for periodic visits by Christine to the family home. Christine is a PKU victim, profoundly retarded and nonverbal. It is now known that those diagnosed with PKU can be placed on a special diet for life in order to avoid the impact of the condition. In fact, by the late 1950s, hospitals in Illinois were required to test for PKU. Today, those who tested positive immediately went on the special diet, and led normal lives, many graduating from college. In contrast, Christine's IQ has been measured at 10. However, she appears to enjoy the company of her friends and caregivers at Howe. She also works at SouthStar Services in Chicago Heights, a sheltered workshop, assembling products for area businesses, along with other disabled residents. While Christine is nonverbal and profoundly retarded, she is able to communicate by pulling on the arm of those whom she knows and trusts and directing them regarding her needs. Due to her condition, and her inability to understand more than basic conversation, Christine thrives on routine, and change is very upsetting to her.

As a result, I am very concerned about the plans to close Howe Center. I would like to see it kept open, as my sister appears to be happy there. Moreover, despite trying since early September, I have not yet been able to find a new residence for her in the area. Forcing her to move would be bad enough. Forcing her to move outside of the area, away from her SouthStar workshop and the family home would be a disaster for her. To those in government or advocacy groups who argue that closing Howe is the right thing to do, please ask them if they personally know, or grew up with, any disabled

person, and how that person would handle a change of their home, their work, and access to relatives. If they aren't closely acquainted with the disabled, they aren't in a position to really comprehend the impact of such a major decision. What really concerns me is that the Illinois officials made this closure decision without consulting or attempting to talk to the people who know the impacted residents the best, their guardians and family members.

I understand that the opponents of Howe Center believe that State Operated Developmental Centers ("SODCs") should be closed down due to the costs compared to Community Integrated Living Arrangements ("CILAs"). However, the people who make these arguments fail to point out that the residents of Howe, in many cases, are much more severely disabled than those being placed in CILAs. Moreover, SODCs are monitored differently than CILAs. I understand that SODCs are unionized, and CILAs generally aren't. SODCs have medical and psychological staff on site, while CILAs outsource. As such, comparing costs of SODCs to CILAs is like comparing apples to oranges.

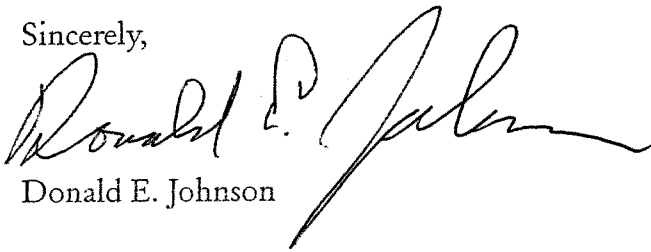
However, what is lost in the financial discussion is the embarrassing fact that Illinois devotes the least amount of money to the disabled when compared to all of the United States and Washington D.C. With the wealth of the citizens of the State of Illinois, when compared to the 49 other states, shouldn't we at least be average? We are not asking for the Taj Mahal, we are only asking for average expenditures. In fact, some have testified at meetings before Illinois legislators that State of Illinois employees have encouraged families with disabled loved ones to move to another state in order to receive adequate care!

Howe Center is a relatively modern facility. Ironically, several units were recently rehabbed to very nice conditions within the last four or five years. So, the physical structure of Howe is not a problem. The Department of Public Health decertified Howe Center apparently for employee and paperwork issues, thus denying Illinois Medicare/Medicaid reimbursements. I am most concerned that Illinois has failed to obtain recertification of Howe. Did Illinois really want to succeed, or was the real goal to close it down? How can Illinois have certification for other SODCs and not Howe. Significantly, most of the guardian and family members with loved ones at Howe are fighting to keep it open. If Howe was such a substandard place, why the objections to closure?

However, Howe is different from other SODCs in Illinois. When Howe was first built, it was in a rural suburb. Lately, there has been commercial development on all sides of the Howe Center. Howe's land is clearly the most valuable commercial real estate of any SODC in Illinois. Is that why it is slated for closure? Our letters to the governor have gone unanswered. The governor's chief fund raiser, Rezko, a real estate developer, is now in jail. Can anyone determine whether the governor wants to close Howe to benefit a real estate developer? How could we find out?

Please let me know what COFGA can do to address the foregoing issues, and what I can do to keep the Howe Center open. Thanks for your attention to this critical matter.

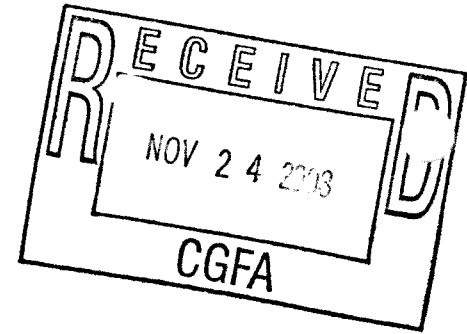
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald E. Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Donald E. Johnson

November 19, 2008

Commission On Government Forecasting & Accountability  
703 Stratton Ofc. Bldg.  
Springfield, IL 62706



Dear Executive Director Dan R. Long:

We are the parents of William Junkroski who resides at the Howe Center in Tinley Park, Illinois. We are very concerned that the state is in the process to close the Howe Center. One of the reasons for the closure is decertification due to the findings of Equip For Equality relating to deaths due to poor care. These findings are false.

Our son has lived at Howe for 35 years. He has seizures and other health problems with a mental age range of a 2 year old. He gets good care and is now 56 years old. Closing this Center would put a strain on his well-being and ours. The Group Homes are not an option for our son since he needs 24 hour a day nursing care. Relocating him far from us would be a hardship since we are older and would not be able to visit him as often or properly monitor his care.

The Howe Center was a state of the art center for his care when they opened. Why it was allowed to fall into such disrepair is troubling since there are not many other options available for our son.

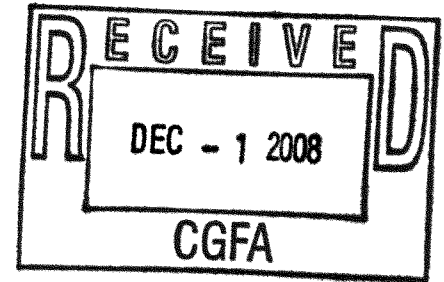
We are also bothered that certain factions may be lobbying for the closing of the Center to acquire the property for Business and Commercial development.

Our residents deserve to stay in their homes. Should our son and the other residents pay for the poor management of this facility by the state and the state appointed directors? As parents that are aging, please help put this worry behind us and find a way to fund and develop the Howe Center back into a state of the art facility for our son.

Sincerely,

Mr. And Mrs. Hilary Junkroski  
31 N. Broadway Apt. 112  
Joliet, IL 60435  
815-726-6904

November 25, 2008



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

Attn: Dan R. Long, Executive Director

My daughter, Angelique, is a Howe Center resident. She was released from the hospital yesterday, November 24th. She had been in the hospital since November 13th with pneumonia in both lungs. I was visiting her at Howe on November 13th, and noticed that she was very quiet, not her usual self. I told the staff and they immediately contacted the nurse, who came and checked her out. She called the doctor and we went right over to her office on campus and had the doctor look at her. Although Angel had no symptoms, when the doctor listened to her chest, she heard the pneumonia. Howe Center provides the medical care that is important for my daughter's health. I doubt that she will receive the same quality of care in the community.

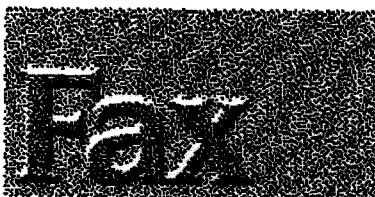
I have talked to people at Suburban Access, Inc. I am not encouraged that I will find placement for Angel in the community with the level of care that will be as good as Howe Center. I don't think that I will even find any placement in the community, period. You and I know that Howe is not perfect, but I have been checking on places in the community. There have been rapes, deaths, and beatings in community placement and they only pay a fine.

My daughter needs Howe Center to stay open. She receives the medical care that she needs, is close to her family, and enjoys a good quality of life.

When I started looking for placement for my daughter in 1987, we went to in state and out of state and could not find a place that would even consider her. Finally Mount St. Joseph in Lake Zurich accepted her. She was there about three weeks when they called me and told me I would have to bring her home because they could not deal with her medical problems. Howe Center is her home, please don't take it away from her.

Sincerely,

Linda Brown  
608 Cherrywood Drive  
North Aurora, IL 60542  
630-892-3834  
lb608@sbcglobal.net



---

**Date:** December 9, 2008

**To:** Dan R. Long, Executive Director  
Commission on Government Forecasting  
and Accountability  
Phone: 217-782-5320  
Fax: 217-782-3513

**From:** Tony Paulauski, Executive Director  
The Arc of Illinois  
Phone: 815-464-1832  
Fax: 815-464-5292

**Pages:** 4 (including this page)

---

**Subject:** The Arc of Illinois calls for your support of  
closing Howe Developmental Center in Tinley Park, IL.

*of Illinois*

18207-A Dixie Highway  
Homewood, Illinois 60430  
708/206-1930  
FAX 708/206-1171

December 9, 2008

Dan R. Long  
Executive Director  
Commission on Government Forecasting & Accountability  
703 Stratton Office Building  
Springfield, IL 62706

Dear Mr. Long:

What would you say if you learned that the local hospital in your community had been fined \$26.5 million because of health and safety violations for their patients?

What would you say if, in that same hospital, eleven patients had died under questionable circumstances since September, 2005?

You would be outraged.

The above two scenarios have actually occurred at the state institution in Tinley Park, the Howe Developmental Center. And we are outraged.

The following is a statement about one of the most recent deaths at Howe. It is graphic and makes me wonder why the Department of Human Services would even think of keeping this state institution open.

"A woman who was profoundly mentally retarded, blind, non-verbal and with significant heart disease was forced to undergo a pap smear without the required anti-anxiety medication to ensure that she could calmly and safely undergo the procedure. The individual struggled continuously through the test, causing staff to hold her arms and legs in order to complete the procedure. The individual remained upset afterwards and, within an hour of the pap smear, collapsed and died of an apparent heart attack." (Equip for Equality, March 8, 2007)

The other ten death descriptions are just as hard to read.

It is time to close Howe Developmental Center. It is time to prepare a plan to rebalance the developmental disability system in Illinois. We need to invest our resources supporting families and individuals with developmental disabilities in their community.

We need your leadership. The time is now.

Sincerely,



Tony Paulauski  
Executive Director

*"Advocates for Change"*

# chicagotribune.com

## Howe to close, at last

September 13, 2008

By this time next year, the Howe Developmental Center, a state-run care facility for disabled adults in Tinley Park that houses more than 300 adults, will be closed. State officials announced last week that they will begin relocating residents by winter. Howe will be shuttered no later than July 1.

It's about time. Howe has been plagued by substandard care and health and safety problems. Twenty people died under questionable circumstances at Howe between September 2005 and May 2008, according to Equip for Equality, an advocacy group for the disabled. Conditions were so bad that in March 2007 the federal government stripped Howe of its Medicaid certification--along with \$26.5 million in federal operating funds.

Rather than close the facility, Illinois spent *more* money to make up the loss of federal funds.

Finally, the state is getting the message.

"Although we think we have made progress, we just don't think that we can get it to the point where we can get it recertified. The issues are systemic," said Lilia Teninty, head of developmental disabilities for the Department of Human Services.

Give the Blagojevich administration some credit for finally recognizing that. But if it wants credit for more than a belated decision, it will have to continue to shift this state away from institutional care and toward community-based care.

Illinois has relied much too heavily on expensive, large-scale institutions to care for its developmentally disabled residents. The state has nine such facilities, housing about 2,300 residents. That's 1,100 fewer residents than it had in 1997. Yet Illinois still relies on institutions more than most states. There is a place for such institutions. But most developmentally disabled residents flourish in smaller, community-based settings. Many people are able to integrate into the community and work outside the home.

Institutional care is also far more expensive than community-based care. Illinois citizens pay about \$140,000 a year for each person in an institution, compared with \$50,000 a year for community care.

Residents of Howe and their families will have the final say on whether they move into community-based settings or other state-run institutions. The state should encourage them to opt for community care where its appropriate. That will likely lead to some initial resistance.

The state has promised to place many of the 755 staff members at Howe in other state facilities.

Those staffing decisions have to be made based on the needs of patients and taxpayers, with a clear eye on creating a smaller, more efficient system. The worst thing the state could do would be to transport some of the problems at Howe to other facilities.

Closing Howe and focusing on a more efficient care system should free up money to improve and expand community-based care. A key: Pay more to the people who work in those facilities. They're often forgotten when the state legislature makes budget decisions.

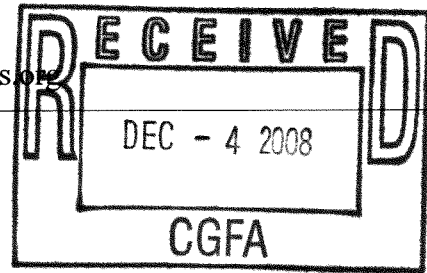
Howe had to close. Now let's build on a sound decision.

Copyright © 2008, Chicago Tribune



## *Campaign for Real Choice in Illinois*

44 East Main, Suite #208  
Champaign, IL 61820  
Phone: (217) 493-5445  
Website: [www.realchoiceinillinois.org](http://www.realchoiceinillinois.org)



December 2, 2008

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

Dear Members of the Commission:

The Illinois economy is in crisis. The state's revenues are plummeting and the state currently owes \$4 billion in unpaid bills for services rendered many months ago. According to a November 2008 report by this Commission, Illinois faces a \$1.3 billion revenue shortfall in FY 2009. The same report says the state's economic woes are likely to continue "with the worst perhaps to come in FY 2010."<sup>1</sup>

Clearly our state needs to learn to do more with less. The state simply can no longer afford to pay too much for substandard, ineffective programs. Only quality programs that benefit the greatest number of people at the lowest possible per capita cost deserve to be funded. Those programs that do not provide high quality services in an efficient manner should be redesigned or cut entirely.

The Howe Developmental Center in Tinley Park has been continuously struggling with serious concerns over the safety of its residents. Howe has been cited by health and welfare authorities for serious and prolonged violations of safety standards. Examples include:

- Leaving individuals in urine soaked clothing,
- Failing to provide enough food and drink, and
- Falsifying physician documentation.

Investigations into the deaths of over 20 residents at Howe since 2005 revealed many instances of grossly substandard care, according to the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy system for Illinois, Equip for Equality.

As a result, in March 2007, the federal government revoked Howe's certificate to receive federal Medicaid funding. Since then, the state has lost \$42 million in federal matching funds because it has been unable to bring the facility up to the minimal Medicaid safety standards. When individuals currently residing at this facility are allowed to move to safer settings, state taxpayers will stand to regain the \$27 million each year in Medicaid matching funds.

Over the past eighteen months, Illinois taxpayers have paid a total of over \$85 million to keep Howe open. It costs more than \$120,000 to house just one resident in a large institution each year, but on average only \$55,000 to allow that same person to live in a small home in their own neighborhood. If Illinois would offer the same choice in care that other states have, it would not only help its citizens live better lives, it would free up 200 million dollars annually to help more people in better ways. Yet, Illinois ranks 51st compared to other states (and Washington D.C.) in terms of the number of people supported in community settings rather than institutional ones

---

<sup>1</sup> "Economic and Revenue Update FY 2009," Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability, November 19, 2008, p. 24.

In the past, providing care to people with developmental disabilities was only possible in large institutions, where doctors, nurses, and equipment are available 24 hours a day. However, advances in technology and social conscience have allowed us to provide community supports superior to institutional care for individuals with significant disabilities.

It is time to move to a more progressive way of providing supports to people with developmental disabilities in Illinois, and it can begin by closing Howe Developmental Center, which costs the state a fortune and provides grossly substandard care.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lester T. Pritchard", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Lester T. Pritchard  
Campaign for Real Choice in Illinois