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Thank you Chairman Sprague and Ranking Member Sykes for allowing me to testify in front of the Health and Human Service Subcommittee today. My name is Catherine David. I'm here to speak on behalf of my brother, Steven Bulvony. Steven is unable to speak for himself and is a resident of the Youngstown Developmental Center.

On January 20th, 2015 I received notification that the Youngstown Developmental Center was scheduled for closure. My parents chose YDC for my brother's placement after my father was diagnosed with a terminal illness. This was the hardest decision my family ever had to make on his behalf.

As a result, I became my brother's guardian to ensure that Steven would continue to have the loving and caring life that he deserves.

My brother has some significant challenges. He has a mental capacity of a 3 year old. Steven is nonverbal, and autistic. He has developmental delays, an obsessive-compulsive disorder, as well as a behavior disorder. My family has been blessed in that the Youngstown Developmental Center has provided Steven with the care, love and support that he needs for the last 29 years of his life. The Youngstown Developmental Center is his home, and through no fault of his own, his home is being taken away from him.

The administrators and staff at the Youngstown Developmental Center have always been there to work with my family and others to address and resolve any issues that have arisen due to

my brother's condition. I can't express how helpful they have been in providing Steven with the quantity of life and dignity he deserves.

YDC has put on a number of wonderful programs that we've been able to attend with Steven. Additionally, the partnership YDC has with the Fairhaven Sheltered Workshop has provided Steven with important daily programming. These daily routines are what keeps Steven grounded. My brother is unable to go to an ICF (intermediate care facility) It's just not the right type of facility for his condition.

I've been fortunate to have Steven in my life, and to have worked for over 30 years with the broader developmentally disabled population. As a legal guardian, I believe we should have a real choice between sending our loved ones to a Developmental Center in our region, an ICF or a group home.

I am begging you to listen to the parents, legal guardians, and community members before you, and to help us overturn this terrible decision. The Youngstown Developmental Center is an attribute to our community, and deserves to remain open for years to come. I know other families in the future may need a placement for their loved ones some day. I want to believe that the state legislature would support these families by making sure their loved ones were able to enjoy the care, and support that the Youngstown Developmental Center has provided my family.

My brother is not a number, or a statistic; he's a human being that deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. I ask that you reconsider closing down the Youngstown Developmental Center.

Thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.