

Honorable Chair and Members of the Finance Committee

My name is Debbi Almeyda. My brother, Ricky Gorm, was admitted to the Montgomery Development Center 33 years ago, as a consequence of being abused, suffering 10 years abuse by his peers in our neighborhood; abuse that was so severe at times that he once received severe lacerations and a broken leg after they beat him and then rolled over him with bicycles as he lay helplessly on the ground.

He was admitted to the Montgomery center through court probate when he began having violent tantrums and my family was afraid and unable to control him at home. It took the staff of professionals at the center over 10 years to get Ricky under safe enough control that I could walk him around the grounds when I visit him.

I came to you today to beg you to open your hearts and look at the possible consequence of placing these unfortunate individuals, like Ricky, out into the community and into private group homes when time and time again the placements have resulted in tragedy or incarceration because of their complex behaviors.

Please help these vulnerable and fragile citizens fight the injustice and pain they have suffered. Please, please help us support against closing the Montgomery Development Center.

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