

Honorable Chair and Members of the Finance Committee

My name is Marie Schoettmer and I live in Kettering, Ohio. I have a son Jim, who resides at the Montgomery Developmental Center. He is 6 foot 4 inches tall and is 52 years old. He is profoundly mentally handicapped - he is able to walk but is non-verbal and needs assistance with everything else. He has behavior problems which seem to be cyclical (very active, hits himself and grabs at others). He was in a group home in the community prior to the Montgomery center, which did not work out very well. There were many visits to the emergency room because of behavior. He was on a lot of medication - side effects put him in the hospital several times, and also caused falling. He broke his legs on one of the falls, and it was then decided that the Montgomery center would be a more appropriate placement where his needs could be taken care of.

I can't tell how relieved I was to finally have a proper placement for my son. He has been at the Montgomery center for 13 years.

In my opinion, group homes don't have the services and supports for some of the low functioning individuals, especially with difficult behaviors. The needed services are just not there. Developmental centers are very important and closing them is not the answer.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Marie Schoettmer
5711 Oak Valley Road
Dayton, Ohio 45440
Tel: (937) 434-7340