

Good morning/afternoon

My name is Nancy Lubanovich. I have a developmentally disabled daughter, Sancy. She is the main reason I am here to testify.

As I mentioned last time I was here, I really do appreciate your efforts on all disabled citizens. I can't image what an extremely difficult position you are in, trying to balance the parents concerns, the states needs and getting all of these items to coexist together under federal guidelines. I believe it would be true test for Solomon himself. When we decided to leave California because of my employment loss. I checked into 4 states concerning what they offered in the way of education, recreation and employment opportunities for Sancy. Ohio was the "hands down" best location in all three categories. Upon settling here, we started our lives with high hopes and believed that we had made a great choice.

Sancy worked at various retail jobs, but they didn't turn out to be the right places for her, as it has become for most of our children. Luckily, TAC was offered and became like a second home for her. I'm told that some people believe TAC (or any sheltered workshop) is segregated and that it is demeaning to have our children working there. This just isn't true, and they definitely don't feel that way themselves. The people working there are similar to each other with disabilities and feel safe and protected, not segregated. Don't you seek out people you feel comfortable with. I know I do. If having these people in one work place, means they are segregated, then you would have to consider Special Olympics segregated. I can't believe that the Kennedys would have considered Special Olympics segregated when they started it. IRS doesn't consider sheltered workshops segregated as they give parents or caregivers a deduction for anyone working in one. I'm sure the IRS wouldn't do that if it was considered a segregated work place by any section of the U.S. Government. I hope you will be able to see it with Kennedy eyes. It is a great program and I don't believe that anyone has ever considered it as being unfair or demeaning to the people who so enjoy participating in it.

Sancy worked with company providers, but that didn't work out for the best. We were offered an independent provider and that has truly been a God send for us. Although the company providers did have some excellent employees, the company wasn't able to keep them as wages or benefits couldn't compete with the employees other employment options. Therefore, we were constantly changing providers which was very upsetting for everyone involved, including the employees themselves. I often see some of them and they are always interested in my daughter; s progress and health.

I understand the state doesn't want to be responsible for the independent providers, which is what the current proposed law would force. I would have no problem doing the necessary items to cover what the state doesn't want to do. However, I'm sure there are a lot of parents that wouldn't or couldn't handle that area. As the company providers are responsible for their employees, I'm sure the independent providers would be glad and able to be responsible for themselves. I believe they are already doing a large portion of that paperwork now. I check my insurance billings from Medical every month. Couldn't we do the same for our independent providers. I believe I was asked to verify the company providers records as well. The independent providers give us a true choice for our children. I'm sure no one wants to take any choices from us, but in effect, the law would be doing that. Surely we can come up with a fair and equal solution. America has always been about freedom of choice. I hope that still holds true for people that have special problems.

I am also familiar with Mueller as my nephew lives there. He has Cerebral Palsy and is very restricted as to movement, feeding himself or speech. If you would close his cabin, he would not be able to live by himself. As too many of our people are in the same boat and would not be able to have any kind of

life quality. I have heard that these places are too expensive to upkeep or repair. Then in a short period of time, I hear of different agencies, etc. moving into these places. It makes you wonder, which needed the building more, the disabled or the agencies. I hear stories of people that were living in this type of home and are now homeless. I also hear of them being placed in jails and prisons as the courts have no where else to send them. This is definitely not a desirable solution for these people. I can only image what kind of abuse and terror that they are having to live through on a daily basis. I know that money is tight, but I also know that we have to take these people into consideration and just not ignore them. I know that our jails and prisons are not inexpensive to run either. I believe that we would want our citizens in homes, safe and sound, instead of spending on jails or prisons. Our country spends billions and billions on overseas countries to help them. Why aren't we doing the same for our own countrymen and women. Especially since half the time the overseas countries turn around and end up hating and spitting on us. Isn't it possible to keep some of the billions at home for our own. We are still one of the riches countries in the world. Let's not short change some of our most deserving citizens. Of course there are others as deserving and I'm not forgetting them. However, I know the disabled are very silent members of our community. That's why I feel we must speak up and let people hear about them and their needs.