

July 17, 2015

TO: Governor Jerry Brown
Department of Developmental Services

RE: Sonoma Developmental Center Closure

I am a 29-year resident of Sonoma Valley, a former neighbor of SDC, and the Area One Trustee on the Sonoma County Board of Education. The Sonoma County Office of Education was a vendor to SDC prior to its losing accreditation.

In the late 1980s, my husband and I lived around the corner from SDC. Like most long time Sonoma Valley residents, I have known many people who have worked at SDC.

SDC is a part our community, a part of our history. We do not view it as an institution. It provides services like none other serving a population with very special needs that cannot be, and have not been, met in the community.

I ask you to please listen to the families and to the people of Sonoma Valley who know SDC better than anyone in Sacramento. The families are scared. There is a high death rate of individuals who are transferred from SDC into community homes. These homes do not have the specially trained staff or the medical services to take care of these individuals.

SDC should continue to be a place where these high needs, frail individuals can continue to live and be cared for by highly skilled staff. It needs to provide housing for individuals who do not make it in the community.

The medical, dental and behavioral services provided at SDC should continue to be provided, not only for its residents, but for all developmentally disabled individuals who need the services. The wheelchair repair, adapted equipment and shoe making services must also be continued, as these services are not provided in the community.

A fast track closure process is arbitrary, unrealistic, and will lead to the early death of many SDC residents.

Again, please listen to the families. They know best.

Regards,

Gina Cuclis, Vice President
Sonoma County Board of Education
1212 Alberca Rd.
Sonoma, CA 95476