

**Proposed Resolution
Supporting the Transformation of
SONOMA DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER**

To Include Critical Patient Services and Protection and Public Access to the Land

WHEREAS: The Sonoma Developmental Center has been slated to close by the end of 2018. The center has been in existence since November 24, 1891. It employs 1,200 people who provide services to a reduced population of about 400 very fragile clients, many of whom have been there for decades.

WHEREAS: Some individuals are successful in community homes, but after over 30 years of placements in the community, the patients who remain at SDC have extremely severe medical issues, behavioral problems and/or physical disabilities that cannot be cared for in the community.

WHEREAS: The reported cost difference between SDC and community placement is very deceptive, as the Developmental Center costs include medical treatment, dental treatment, equipment maintenance, therapies and day programs. In addition, there are developmentally disabled citizens inappropriately housed in our jails, but their costs have not been included in the published reports. Finally, admissions to SDC have been halted for several years thereby increasing the per-patient costs to maintain the facility.

WHEREAS: There are unique and beneficial services at SDC that are not available in the community such as custom-made wheelchairs, custom-made shoes, dentists, doctors, eye specialists and other medical specialists who know how to work with severely disabled patients. Many medically fragile and high risk psychological patients languish in urban hospitals because they have nowhere else to go for assessment and treatment.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that we **First Congregational Church of Sonoma** urge Governor Brown and the California Department of Developmental Services to actively and creatively pursue the “transformation” of Sonoma Developmental Center rather than its closure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support the Parent Hospital Association’s (PHA) key points: maintain on site, a center that provides and maintains adaptive wheelchairs and other durable equipment; has medical, dental, mental and behavioral support for the developmentally disabled; provides housing, a crisis center and placement of last resort for those who cannot transition to community homes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support permanent protection of the open space, land and wildlife corridor on SDC property and support expanding public access and recreational opportunities that are compatible with the property’s conservation values.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we want the views of PHA, the SDC Coalition and those of the Sonoma community **heard** and **seriously considered** in developing a plan for the future of SDC.

Signed *Margie Mitchell* 9/8/2015 Margie Mitchell, Moderator
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