

Dear Members of the Public Health Committee,

I urge you to amend Senate Bill 129 to include language to reopen Southbury Training School (STS).

My uncle has been at STS for over 50 years. For him and many others, STS has been and continues to be a crucial part of Connecticut's system of care for the intellectually and developmentally disabled. Reopening the doors at STS will both revitalize the facility and benefit many more people in the surrounding community like my uncle.

STS is a state-run Intermediate Care Facility that meets strict federal standards. In addition to providing comprehensive services to the people who live there, STS provides dental and other services to more than 500 community-based clients of the Department of Developmental Services.

As a result of both a court order and a bill passed by the Connecticut Legislature (without the input of STS families or guardians), new admissions to STS have been blocked since the 1980s. As a result, with fixed costs of operating STS have been spread over a steadily shrinking base of residents, the cost of care per resident has steadily risen. This has periodically fueled a badly made argument from opponents who willfully fail to consider the effect the prior legislation they championed had on the very cost structure they now argue is too high.

Allowing new admissions to STS would have many positive consequences, including:

- New admissions would result in a lowered cost of care per resident at the facility and help make it financially attractive as alternative to more expensive and harder to manage group homes scattered throughout the state.
- New admissions would shorten or possibly eliminate a growing waiting list for residential care and services for intellectually disabled people throughout the state.
- New admissions would allow STS to continue and possibly expand its role as a resource for dental and medical care for community-based clients of DDS.

Please open the doors of STS to those who need a top-rate facility. Let's us STS to the fullest -- after all, the state needs to get the benefit of all it has invested in STS over the years.

Kind regards,

Michael Fadus
nephew of Richard Iadarola, resident of STS