

Testimony of Walter Glomb  
to the Public Health Committee  
February 27, 2013

Good morning. My name is Walter Glomb. I live in Rockville with my 25-year-old son who has Down syndrome and receives supports from the Department of Developmental Services. While he currently lives with me, my son may someday need residential services from DDS.

I am here today to OPPOSE three bills:

Proposed S.B. No. 129 AN ACT CONCERNING THE HARTFORD REGIONAL CENTER OPERATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES.

Proposed H.B. No. 6001 AN ACT CONCERNING RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.

Proposed H.B. No. 6005 AN ACT CONCERNING A MORATORIUM ON THE CLOSURE OF GROUP HOMES OPERATED BY THE DDS.

The closure of group homes in regional centers will not deprive anyone of residential services. These facilities close when they have too few residents and too many empty unfunded beds. When a facility closes, the remaining residents are moved to other public sector vacancies or to private group homes. The proposed biennial budget does not include funding for these obsolete facilities. Closing these facilities will not reduce choice. Closing these facilities will actually increase choices for more people by utilizing limited public funds more efficiently.

These facilities were once the "one size for all" - before DDS developed community-based alternatives. Now the Department provides a large network of group homes that are operated by private non-profit agencies among other community-based alternatives.

In 2011 the Connecticut General Assembly's Program Review and Investigations Committee studied this question and found that private group homes are the largest provider of residential services for all levels of need including the highest level of need, for which private group homes serve 70 percent of DDS clients receiving residential services who are assessed at that level. The study also found that, on average, it costs about 2.5 times more to take care of the clients with the same level of need in a public group home as a private one and, based on the lower number of deficiency citations in private group homes, that the quality of private group homes is at least as good as that in public facilities.

Regarding Proposed H.B. No. 6001 AN ACT CONCERNING RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, I wonder, would this bill put young adults ahead of others who have been waiting for years? If we create new residential capacity, shouldn't we first serve those who are on the Emergency and Priority Waiting Lists?

With more than six hundred people on the residential waiting lists and more than a thousand on the planning lists, DDS is now actually reducing funding for residential placements to encourage alternatives. Consistent with it's new mission, families are presently engaging DDS in forums to create these new alternatives. Please leave us the freedom to allocate our limited resources in accordance with the needs of all families.

Thank you.