

Catherine and John Emmanuel HB 5534

Dear Sir or Madam,

We are the parents of a 38 year old autistic daughter. Nicole currently gets SSI and Medicaid, but we have not been able to get other benefits for her since she is not recognized by the DDS as having an IQ of 69 or below. Nicole cannot drive, cook, work nor take care of herself and we would put her actual capacity as that of an 11 year old with poor judgement and comprehension of the world around her. As we age our biggest concern is that Nicole will have no one to take care of her as she does not qualify for a group home under the DDS state requirements, which we find absurd. When she was in school, many of her friends were considered mentally retarded and some functioned better than she did, they all qualified for housing while Nicole did not. This policy MUST be changed since there are many autistic adults who will be "on the street" as the baby boomers can no longer take care of them.

Sincerely,

Catherine and John Emmanuel
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