

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and esteemed members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Karen Hlavac and for the past ten years my son has resided in a public ICF facility. I am opposed to Senate Bill 1088 which directs the commissioner to develop a plan to close ICF facilities.

My son requires the specialized level of care that only an ICF provides. His medical and behavioral needs cannot be met without this level of care. He is domiciled on a unit with access to nursing care twenty-four hours a day. These nurses provide suctioning, straight catheterization, medication administration, G-tube hydration, nutrition and replacement. They also monitor and assess my son for changes in his medical condition.

Furthermore, due to his life-threatening PICA and behavioral issues, his unit has been fitted with pass code access, alarmed doors, and there is no access to food, water or other non-potable items. Additionally, access to my son's unit is restricted to only certain highly trained staff members. My son and others in ICF facilities need the specialized and coordinated care that integrates rehabilitative day program services and nursing care with ancillary services such as OT, PT and speech.

To create a plan to close ICF facilities is to deny my son and others an appropriate setting in which their needs can be met. This is an issue of the greatest importance to our neediest and most vulnerable citizens. Where else do you think their specialized needs can be met? This appears to be a bottom-line only decision without any consideration as to how this will impact my son's health and safety. To require the commissioner to develop this plan to close ICF facilities is outrageous. I respectfully request that the members of this committee reject this bill and stand up for the rights and needs of the individuals served in ICF facilities.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I appreciate your attention to this matter. If you have specific questions regarding my letter, please contact me.

Sincerely,

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