



COMMUNITY NOW!

Independence from waiting. Freedom from institutions.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Now! Responds to the Sunset Commissions recommendations to close 6 State Supported Living Centers, starting with Austin State Supportive Living Center by 2017.

Community Now! is a statewide advocacy organization that has called for the closure and consolidation of State Supported Living Centers since its inception in 2007. Community Now! is represented by people with disabilities, some of which have lived in institutions, families who have loved ones with disabilities and advocates for community services. It is important to note that Community Now! has always advocated for Texas to develop a long range plan to judiciously and thoughtfully close institutions ensuring the people leaving have the supports and services they need to live their lives as they define them. Further, Community Now! believes that community service providers must have the resources for trained staff and funds to provide exceptional services. Finally, Community Now! advocates for a accountability of the community provider system.

Joe Tate, Community Now! Policy Specialists states: “We are very encouraged by the Sunset Commission’s recommendations to close six State Supported Living Centers (SSLCs). Our sincere hope is that these recommendations will become reality and that DADS carefully and thoughtfully ensures the successful transition of people moving to community. Further, that community providers have the funds to ensure successful transition and are held accountable to providing exceptional services.”

“These recommendations offer hope for people to have a real chance to live in the community. The recommendations reflect the issues of gross waste of tax payer dollars, and a failed system. A system that has put our most vulnerable citizens in harm’s way while attempting to fix what has been broken for decades. We stand ready to support this transition.” Michelle Dooley, President of Community Now!

“It’s past time to do this. Now let’s all do it right!” stated Robert “Sparky” Mertz, a former resident of a state operated institution.

For additional information, please contact: Joe Tate, Community Now! Policy Specialist: at 1.830.305.0613 or joetate@communitynowfreedom.org.

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