



COMMUNITY **NOW!**

Independence from waiting. Freedom from institutions.

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 16, 2012

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January 18: Statewide advocacy organizations will hold a press conference to call on state leadership to meet with them to discuss closure and consolidation of a failed system and the bleak future of the long term supports and services system in Texas.

WHAT: Press Conference

WHO: Community NOW! & ADAPT

WHEN: Wednesday, January 18, 2012. At 1:00PM

WHERE: The Vaughn Building, 807 Brazos St # 400, Austin, TX 78701

WHY: To address our concern about the disparities between institutional care and home and community based services here in Texas, and to call on our leadership to meet with advocacy organization to discuss ways to reform our broken system.

Representatives from statewide advocate groups gather outside Rick Perry's Campaign headquarters to demand that Rick Perry's Staff, Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst's Staff, and Commissioner Chris Traylor of the Department of Aging and Disability Services meet with Community NOW! and ADAPT to discuss realistic ways that we can work together to restructure supports and services in Texas. Sarah Watkins, a Community Now! Board member and disability rights activist said, "Texas must begin to align with other states and end the institutional bias. We have to rebalance the system by implementing more home and community based services." Rising costs for State Supported Living Centers, their continued lack of compliance, continued abuse and neglect at SSLCs, cuts to community based services and the ever growing interest list for home and community based services signal to advocates that Texas is heading towards a crisis of epic proportion. Ideally, advocates are calling these meetings with the hopes of getting on the same page with the establishment for the next legislative session. Nicky Boyte of ADAPT said, "It's an uphill battle to get Texas Representatives educated on our issues, and then they hear opposing views from DADS and the Governor's office. It would be best for everyone to hear those opposing views first, and then find common ground to get things done!" Recent attempts to restructure the system have been met with minimal success. Advocates are asking for the opportunity to independently evaluate the results of efforts like, the Relocation Specialists at State Supported Living Centers mandated to independently evaluate each person living in a SSLC to determine if they would be better served in the community.

www.communitynowfreedom.org

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