

**To: Department of Developmental Services**

**Re: The closure of the Sonoma Developmental Center**

It is the opinion of this writer and resident living in the Sonoma Valley that before any final decision is reached as to the closure of SDC or the disposition of its client residents it should be mandatory for those making this decision, from Governor Brown on down to the current director of DDS and all in the legislature who support this closure and transfer to spend one day at SDC and experience for themselves who are those residents living there, some for 30 years or more and exactly what their lives are like and the people who are and have been caring for them.

This is a momentous, life-shattering decision that will have a profound effect on these people, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters in more than 400 California families, repeatedly pointed out as The most vulnerable of our people, and those making these decisions should know firsthand what they are doing and what the consequences of their decisions will be.

These are not names and cases and files on pieces of paper. These are disables and unprepared and totally dependent souls whose lives matter to their loved ones and to a great many who live in this area of Sonoma County and treasure those who've been left in our care and are deeply connected to the land on which SDC sits. These lives and their welfare matter to us, as they should to those making the decisions that will change their lives in ways that cannot be predicted.

Furthermore a formal Plan for the Transition of the current SDC population to Regional Center facilities, in no way comparable to the services and care provided by the administration and staff of SDC, has been submitted to DDS and should be acknowledged by the Department and followed to the letter of its specifications. This extensive Plan has been generated by the families of SDC residents in conjunction with legal and medical experts and has been drawn for the sole purpose of the welfare of those people whose lives will be changed in ways we cannot begin to fathom.

Whether we have family in these Centers or not they are our children, completely dependent on us for their welfare, for the love and care they deserve. This is our obligation and responsibility in our society and in this community, and if the decision to alter their lives in ways they cannot comprehend based on the money necessary to provide for their welfare to the highest degree is going to be made by the state then those making this decision should meet and face those people and their lives. Then they will know the consequences of their actions in no uncertain terms, and these decision-makers will have to live with what they are contemplating.

Will Shonbrun, Sonoma