

Dear Representative Khan,

I would like to submit testimony to support the DMR/DDS facilities feasibility study.

On Thursday I attended the ISP (individual service plan) for my 53 year old sister Kathleen Crosby. Kathy resides in the **community of Wrentham Developmental Center, where she has access to a gym, swimming pool, medical and dental facility, classrooms, café and auditorium, but most important of all are the excellent direct care services she receives. I am her guardian and her advocate. I love her and have her very best interests at heart. At these meetings I review, and am always totally impressed with the dedication, continuity of care and friendship Kathy gets from the direct care staff, nurses, her psychologist, her recreational therapist and the habilitation co-ordination teachers. She is a very fortunate woman to be living and interacting with such wonderful people. My sister is very happy; she attends religious services, goes off campus for bowling, dining, shopping and other field trips and activities. Wrentham is similar to an “over 50” planned community, which many people enjoy moving to at a certain age. Everyone on campus knows my sister, and it is as if she lives in a very small town. In another way, I also compare Wrentham to an educational campus with dorms, staff, support personnel and wonderful teachers. The residents there will not graduate in four years, however, they will (with the support of the people who love them) continue to live, learn, grow and be as independent as possible, given their health issues and mental capacities and capabilities. Kathy is **profoundly** retarded as a result of Down Syndrome, but continues to thrive, due to the excellent care she receives. People who have never been to this “institution” (I hate that word) have absolutely no idea of what goes on in this wonderful, loving, caring community. I defy anyone to find a kinder township than Wrentham Developmental Center. She deserves the choice to live there and I believe I should have the choice of having her remain in the home she has known for more than 30 years. As a decent society we all have the moral responsibility to care for those who cannot care for themselves and to allow them the choice to stay where they love and call home. Last night I attended an honors night for many employees who have worked at Wrentham for 40, 35, 30, 25, 20 years. Why do they stay so long at such a place?? I believe it is because of all the reasons I mentioned above. Please help us to be able to keep facilities like Wrentham open.**

Respectfully requested,

Robin Elinor Deininger