

Date: December 29, 2015

To: Commissioner Murray, DDS

From: Jay and Elizabeth Lurie

Re: STS Recommendations

We are the parents of a 20 year old woman with a diagnosis of intellectual disability, who has been found eligible to receive DDS services. We have little hope that, under the current DDS system, there will be DDS funding available for her residential placement until we are dead.

Recommendation: Close Southbury Training School and all five state regional centers, and transition current residents to community-based residential placements.

Justification:

Though once regarded as humane, we know now that state-run institutions such as Southbury are unethical. Locking people away to keep them out of sight is unethical. All human beings have a right to live in their community. Locally, Mansfield Training School was closed successfully nearly twenty years ago, and hundreds of Southbury residents have already made the transition to community-based residential settings successfully.

The savings realized by closing Southbury and moving individuals into a less restrictive setting can be reinvested into the DDS system.

Southbury and the state's other five institutions serve fewer than 500 people and cost more than \$350,000 per person. Meanwhile, nearly 2,000 people are waiting for state-funded residential services. Closing the institutions will give many, many families on the DDS Waiting and Planning lists the resources necessary for their adult children to secure a safe future.