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June 29, 2009

The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine  
Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor  
1111 East Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Re: Southeastern Virginia Training Center

Dear Governor Kaine:

The Arc of Virginia requests that you take the necessary actions to defer the rebuilding of the proposed 75-bed facility at the Southeastern Virginia Training Center (SEVTC) in Chesapeake. The Arc's call for a deferral of the 75-bed facility is based on the just released detailed study of the needs of current SEVTC residents. The study concluded that all SEVTC residents could be served in small, community settings.

These study results represent important new information that was not available when you and the General Assembly approved the 75-bed rebuild plan. The Arc believes the study results demand our Commonwealth step back and review how Virginia will meet the needs of its citizens with intellectual disabilities.

As you know, the 2009 session's final state budget included funding to replace the SEVTC's current facility, now at a census of 156, with a 75-bed replacement at the Chesapeake site along with a series of small community homes. The community homes would be scattered throughout the Tidewater and Peninsula areas to serve residents with intellectual disabilities who would be discharged from SEVTC over the next year.

Your Administration has been undertaking a systematic process to implement the 75-bed facility rebuild and has made a significant effort to include all parties impacted in this planning process. However, in light of the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) findings it would appear prudent from a public policy, fiscal and legal standpoint to step back and review the on-site 75-bed rebuild approach (nothing in the HSRI study suggests a delay of capital investments to community-housing).

HSRI is a nationally recognized research group with broad expertise in intellectual and developmental disabilities. It compared SEVTC residents with

persons now being served by Virginia's community waiver program. The comparison used an assessment instrument called the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS). The SIS is a widely used method of determining how much support persons with intellectual disabilities require in terms of activities of daily living (dressing, eating, bathing, etc.) as well as their medical and behavioral needs.

In view of the Olmstead decision direction, of the higher cost of institutional care, and of the MR waiver wait list that has now grown to 4,800 persons, The Arc believes it would be a policy mistake and fiscal folly to build a 75 bed state institution for persons who can be successfully served in the community. We ask you to initiate the necessary actions with the legislature to defer the rebuild concept at SEVTC.

Thank you,



Howard Cullum  
President, The Arc of Virginia

CC: The Honorable Lacey Putney, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Charles Colgan, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Marilyn Tavenner, Secretary of Health and Human Resources  
The Honorable Viola Baskerville, Secretary of Administration  
Commissioner James Reinhard, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services  
Mr. Richard Sliwoski, Director, Department of General Services  
Mr. Mark Rubin, Counselor to the Governor  
Mr. Stephen Harms, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor