

Feb 16th Public Hearing

To: Members of The Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs and the House Committee on General and Housing

I provide this feedback regarding housing on behalf of the Developmental Disabilities Housing Initiative (DDHI), a Vermont parent-run advocacy group. We are a group of over 100 parents of adults who will never be capable of living independently due to their lifelong intellectual and/or developmental disability (I/DD). Once we are no longer able to care for our adult sons and daughters, they will likely end up in Vermont Developmental Disabilities Services Division adult foster care, called "Shared Living." Shared Living works well for some people with I/DD but for those who have higher support needs and who are particularly limited in their ability to express and protect themselves, Shared Living - living in a series of homes - is chronically destabilizing. In many cases, this model lacks the permanence, security, and stability our family members need.

Vermont's move beyond the institutionalization of people with developmental disabilities has limited the housing options to adult foster care - the only option available to adult children like ours since Brandon Training School was closed 30 years ago. Our I/DD community desperately needs the development of housing options that address the range of needs and provide choices. We ask that the state prioritize the needs of these most vulnerable Vermonters and support the development of stable, service-supported housing within the funding for affordable housing in our communities. We, the parents of DDHI, whose family members by federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) rules, deserve choices for stable housing, urge you to take action to help the most needy and vulnerable of Vermonters.

Thank you.

Karen Price