

RECEIVED

2017 JAN -3 AM 8:31

3160

Evelyn Hickman  
12204 Meadowstream Ct  
Herndon, VA 20170  
Dec 31, 2016

Re: Input for DHS Regulation 14-540 Regulation on Home and Community Based Supports and Licensing

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in opposition to the proposed DHS regulation 14-540 Regulation on Home and Community based Supports and licensing, which emphasizes a model of integrating all workers previously employed in a sheltered workshop model into the community leaving little to no support for a sheltered workshop model. Implementing the regulation will necessitate the closing of Associated Production services (APS), a facility which has been so crucial in the integration of developmentally disabled adults in society as workers.

APS has provided a sheltered workshop environment for community members like my sister-in-law for many years. She has worked there for 37 years and has flourished as an adult with a sense of pride in her work and community with the other employees and supervisors. The supervisors were able to provide the support she needed in the sheltered workshop to thrive in the work world with pride in her work and the products she helped assemble. She will not be able to function in a setting where there is not significant understanding and camaraderie between those who have experience with and celebrate those who need the support that APS has provided to developmentally disabled adults through the years.

It will crush her and our family along with others in the community to eliminate the option of a pre-vocational day program (sheltered workshop), such as the one that APS operates. Currently, she is a productive, confident adult member of our society in large part as a result of her work experience at APS.

This pre-vocational adult training facility does NOT isolate or separate my sister-in-law as a developmentally disabled adult from the community. In fact, the setting at APS facilitates her integration and those of her peers as strong, productive members of the community. Without the opportunity to work in this setting, she and others will lose the chance to work and they will remain at home. Associated Production Services (APS) and other pre-vocational day programs/sheltered workshops like it must remain an option for our developmentally disabled community members like my sister-in-law.

Thank you for your consideration and help in this matter. Best regards,

Evelyn Hickman