

**Founding  
Members:**

- The Arc of Virginia
- Partnership for People with Disabilities
- Virginia Board for People with Disabilities
- Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy

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# Virginia Alliance for Community

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Virginia Alliance For Community Asks State Candidates: Make “Community for All” Reforms A Priority**

The Virginia Alliance for Community today called on all candidates for statewide office and House of Delegates to adopt a “Community for All” platform that reforms Virginia’s system of supports for persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. The Alliance - formed in 2008 by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, the Partnership for People with Disabilities, the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy, and The Arc of Virginia - provides a unified voice in advocating for the civil rights and needed services for Virginians with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.

### **What’s the Problem?**

- Virginia continues to inappropriately segregate persons with intellectual and other disabilities in expensive state institutions (Training Centers).
- Training Center costs continue to rise and have now reached an average of \$194,000 a person a year at the state institutions.
- Community care through the ID/MR waiver for persons living in congregate settings, primarily waiver group homes, costs \$95,000 per person annually—half the cost of institutional care for individuals with equivalent levels of need.
- Virginia is one of only 10 states that have not closed any state operated institutions for persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. Eleven states have already closed all of their state-operated institutions.
- Training Centers are old and in growing need of major repairs - the “youngest” buildings at NVTC and SWVTC are already over 30 years old. Residential buildings at CVTC, SEVTC and SVTC are much older.
- The potential costs to rebuild or renovate all five state Training Centers would well exceed \$100 million dollars, which is unjustifiable, particularly in a period of limited state revenues.
- Spending scarce state dollars to rebuild and operate state institutions means fewer dollars available in the future to address the state’s growing waiting lists for the ID and DD waivers - well over 5,000 persons are already waiting.
- There are now 17,000 individuals with ID or DD living at home with parents 60 years or older. These individuals will want and will need community supports as their caregivers die or can no longer provided needed care

- Continued maintenance of large state Training Centers runs counter to the service design both desired by individuals with ID/DD and being pursued by the Commonwealth. Through its System Transformation Grant and Money Follows the Person initiative, Virginia is making great strides to develop an ID/DD service system that is person-centered and promotes community integration.

It is NOT reasonable to segregate people in institutions when experience and research prove that even people with significant disabilities and intensive needs can be supported in the community.

It is NOT reasonable to continue to invest scarce public dollars operating large, inefficient state institutions when there is a better way.

It is NOT reasonable to deny persons with disabilities the right to live among us in the community if needed supports are provided.

### **What's the Solution?**

- ✓ **Commit to transition** Virginia's segregated, institutional system by adopting "Community for All" policy.
- ✓ **Halt future plans to rebuild** state Training Centers. Virginians with the most significant disabilities can - and do - live in their own community homes when appropriate supports are available to them. Capital outlays can be leveraged with community housing money to significantly expand available, limited state dollars.
- ✓ **Consider the fiscal reality.** Is it the best use of limited resources to spend \$194,000 to support an individual in a state operated institution when individuals with like needs are being supported in the community for half that cost?
- ✓ **Make a true long-term commitment** to eliminating waiting lists for waivers and other supports by developing and adopting a reform plan that transitions Virginia from its inefficient institutions to innovative, person-centered supports in the community.

Now is the time for disability reform in Virginia. It is no longer morally or fiscally responsible to invest in segregated settings for our citizens with disabilities. As friends, neighbors, self-advocates, and taxpayers, we ask all state level candidates - gubernatorial and legislative - to end this segregation and make community living for all Virginians with disabilities a priority in their campaigns as well as in their legislative initiatives.

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