

**Founding
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- 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

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Community for All: Sound Program and Fiscal Policy for Virginia

The Virginia Alliance for Community today sounded the alarm against the Commonwealth's intention to rebuild state institutions for persons with intellectual disabilities. During the 2009 legislative session, \$23 million was budgeted for seventy-five (75) beds at the Southeastern Virginia Training Center (SEVTC) in Chesapeake. The Alliance continues to voice its strong opposition to this rebuilding, since it represents a major retreat from forty years of state public policy to transition Virginia from its historical state institutional focus to one of community-based care.

The Alliance has renewed its efforts to have the 75-bed rebuild decision reversed based on study results of current SEVTC residents and on an analysis of the high cost of the proposed rebuilding. Results of an independent assessment of the SEVTC residents, completed after the Administration and General Assembly made its rebuild decision, concluded that individuals with the same level of support needs as SEVTC residents are being served in integrated community settings.

Howard Cullum, President of The Arc of Virginia, said, "The consultant report confirms that SEVTC residents can be supported in the community. The SEVTC rebuild equates to a cost of \$306,000 per person in capital outlays alone. This price tag is unnecessary and much too high when there are other, less costly, quality alternatives available. . SEVTC residents can live in the community just like the more than 8,300 individuals on the ID/MR waiver of whom about 3,800 live in congregate settings in their communities.."

Mr. Cullum further pointed out, "Based on this new information and the state's dire budget situation, it is time for the Administration and General Assembly to step back and rethink the policy and fiscal implications of rebuilding segregated state institutions. The reality is that our Commonwealth could acquire community housing for all SEVTC residents at much less cost. Ask yourself this question: Could you find housing in the Tidewater and Peninsula area for less than \$306,000 a person?"

The Alliance believes that the placement of individuals with disabilities who can live in the community in a segregated state institution violates federal disability laws. It is time for Virginia to transition from segregated state facilities that are very expensive to rebuild and operate and fully shift state policy and funding to community supports. There is a better way!

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The Virginia Alliance for Community was formed in 2008 by The Arc of Virginia, the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, the Partnership for People with Disabilities, the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy, to provide a unified voice in advocating for the civil rights and needed services for Virginians with intellectual and other developmental disabilities.