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December 11, 2008

The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine
Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia
111 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor Kaine:

On behalf of the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD), I would like add my endorsement to the proposal submitted by the *Virginia Alliance for Community* that requests the redirection of proposed expenditure of \$43 million in capitol outlay funds to renovate the Central Virginia Training Center(CVTC) to “instead... build, acquire, and/or renovate state-operated community-based housing” for the residents of CVTC.

NACDD represents Developmental Disabilities Councils across the nation and territories. As a national organization, we have a particularly “up front and close view” of policy initiatives in Virginia, DC, and Maryland and have been paying close attention to the Virginia landscape. Last week, the Arc of the United States, submitted a letter of support for the redirection of the CVTC funds. In that letter Peter Berns, Executive Director cited numerous statistics regarding Virginia’s poor rankings related to the investment in home and community based vs. institutional services to its citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I will not repeat those statistics here but they bear close scrutiny as the Commonwealth prepares to make critical political and economic decisions affecting the future of all citizens.

Virginia is a leader in many areas and has received many awards, including “best managed state.” The time has come to move beyond best practices in business, government, and technology and become a leader in best practices for its citizens. We agree with the Alliance that the time for reform is now. No other states is rebuilding or engaging in large scale renovation of large institutions; Virginia is one of only 10 states that have not closed a single large state operated developmental facility despite the Commonwealth’s stated philosophical commitment to community-based services.

We recognize that the families of individuals who reside in the state training centers are fearful of change. Other states have successfully navigated these challenges and have worked with these individuals and advocacy groups to ensure that their loved ones remained safe and in fact, enjoyed a higher quality of life.

We hope you will give this proposal your close attention. One of the speakers at the recently sponsored Rally for Reform was quoted in local newspaper coverage and her words say it best, "No matter how many posters you put on a cinder block; an institution is not a home." Individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities deserve better. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Brogioli". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael J. Brogioli
CEO