

THE GREEN WIRE

SENATOR TIMOTHY P. GREEN - DISTRICT 13

ROOM 219, STATE CAPITOL, JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101 - PHONE 573-751-2420



Letter to the Editor – *St. Joseph News-Press*

250 words

In reply to “Stop the state” dated Sunday, June 24; I agree that the quintessence of Olmstead is ‘choice’. Parents and guardians should have a choice where their loved ones will be cared for and Bellefontaine Habilitation Center in my district should remain a viable option.

The governor’s plan recognizes the vital need for Bellefontaine to exist, which is a welcome realization and a constructive step in the right direction. Questions must be answered and the plan must be thoroughly examined by all stakeholders, including parents and guardians.

I introduced comprehensive legislation that would require the private, loosely regulated facilities to be held to the same standards of care as state-run habilitation centers. Families of those served by the state’s habilitation centers for the developmentally disabled called for legislation that will maintain state-operated centers while instituting standards, oversight and accountability for Missouri’s private group home industry.

The private group home industry needs to be held to the same standards, review and oversight as the state-run facilities, which are required to meet certain standards by the federal government.

The ten horrific and tragic deaths at the private group home in Anderson is a compelling call for critical reforms. The state must have more stringent investigations into private group homes and facilities that house our elderly and mentally ill. Even single floor buildings should have sprinkler systems and a higher staff-to-resident ratio than was found at the Anderson Guest House in southwest Missouri. Bellefontaine is a viable option for parents and guardians.

Senator Timothy P. Green, represents the 13th District in St. Louis County and resides in Spanish Lake.