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## **Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program Demands Closure of W.D. Partlow Developmental Center**

### ***Startling investigation cites deplorable living conditions, up to \$23 million in taxpayer money wasted each year***

MONTGOMERY, AL (December 8, 2008) – After releasing startling details of a 12 month-long investigation, the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP) today called for the closure of the W.D. Partlow Developmental Center in Tuscaloosa due to deplorable living conditions and wasted taxpayer money.

ADAP is recommending the facility shut its doors before October 1, 2009, and that better living conditions be provided as soon as possible for the current 200 residents, who have intellectual disabilities.

The report documents appalling living conditions in the facility, which costs state taxpayers more than \$263,000 per resident per year. ADAP says the state could provide better community-based living conditions for residents at a cost of \$74,000-\$148,000 per year. The taxpayer savings if the Partlow residents were moved to community-based facilities would be as much as \$23 million per year.

“This institution is antiquated, poorly maintained and a waste of taxpayer money,” said Dr. Ellen Gillespie, executive director of ADAP. “The residents are living in filthy conditions, and their lives are filled with time-wasting activities intended to keep them quiet and compliant. We have successfully closed four other institutions in this state by developing individualized plans for all residents. It’s time for Partlow to join that list and close its doors.”

Other key findings in the report on Partlow, which opened in 1923, include:

- 3 to 1 staff to resident ratio – yet neglect and abuse are still present.
- Unsanitary living conditions found throughout the facility.
- Failure to provide adequate medical services and oversight of residents.
- Violations of basic rights.
- Inability to meet food quality and sanitation standards.

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- Limited training and opportunities for residents.
- Isolation from the community.

In addition to the information above, the report outlines personal struggles of several residents. To download and view the entire report visit <http://www.adap.net/>.

### **About ADAP**

Located in Tuscaloosa, the Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP) is part of the nationwide federally funded protection and advocacy (P&A) system. ADAP's mission is to provide quality, legally based advocacy services to Alabamians with disabilities in order to protect, promote and expand their rights. ADAP's vision is one of a society where persons with disabilities are valued and exercise self-determination through meaningful choices, and have equality of opportunity.

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