



March 24, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of the State of Texas
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711-2428

Dear Governor Abbott,

As you may already know, the Denton State Supported Living Facility in Denton, TX was recently shaken when six residents tested positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus). The March 21 announcement has brought great concern from our community and officials for the residents and employees of the Facility and the potential calamity that awaits should a COVID-19 outbreak occur there. We urgently request your intervention.

Each of the 440+ residents at the Denton State Supported Living Center presents as a high risk for not only contraction of the COVID-19 virus, but its continued transmission. Many residents have pre-existing health conditions that leave them especially vulnerable to diseases that have a disproportionate mortality on the medically compromised. Even still, most residents have intellectual or developmental disabilities such that simple isolation protocols and social distancing instructions are not easily understood nor followed. All Facility residents, regardless of age or intellectual capacity, require a level of care that surpasses that of a typical person or typical COVID-19 patient.

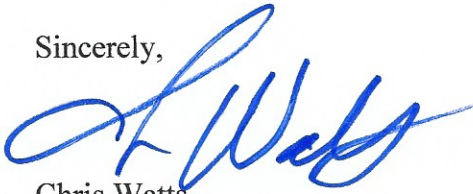
Due to the above factors, the residents and 1,400 employees of the Facility are at great risk for a rapid devastating spread of COVID-19 throughout the campus. In such an event, the local medical capacity could be quickly overwhelmed. Aside from the resources required for the sudden treatment of dozens of Facility residents and employees, the medical and intellectual fragility of these potential patients would require a level of care and staffing that our local hospitals, Medical City Denton and Texas Health Resources Denton, could not provide while attending to the COVID-19 and other healthcare needs of the community at large.

As a state-funded and operated facility, we implore you to take the necessary and proactive step of standing up a temporary, onsite hospital at the Denton State Supported Living Facility. The additional medical resources would drastically improve the capacity for quality treatment for the residents, thus increasing their odds of survival in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak. Additionally, the onsite location would ensure that residents could remain in a familiar place, experience a reduced amount disruption for a population whose health is positively impacted by routine and consistency.

We understand and appreciate the burden you carry in organizing the statewide COVID-19 response and urge you to carefully consider this request. This virus is already present at the State Supported Living Facility and we believe the severity of its impact is yet to be felt.

We want to express our deep appreciation to Senator Jane Nelson and Representative Lynn Stucky for their understanding, advocacy and support for this much needed health installation. We look forward to hearing from your representative on this matter as soon as possible and will support you in any way to that end.

Sincerely,



Chris Watts
Mayor



Andy Eads
Denton County Judge

Cc: Senator Jane Nelson
Representative Lynn Stucky
Commissioner Mike Maples
Todd Hileman, City Manager, City of Denton
Shannon Joske, Director of Administration, Denton County