



DEFINITION OF HOT BUTTON WORDS

INDEPENDENT LIVING

This term has been used loosely as a goal to be achieved by all Americans to “live independently without discrimination” and in support of independent living centers and independent living arrangements. In a letter to PPP from Pres. Obama (July 27, 2011) he states that he signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act which includes an additional \$140 million to support independent living centers.

While the goal appears commendable, it begs the question as to expectations inherent in the term, “Independent.” We ask if the following abilities apply to those considered appropriate for independent living:

- Communicate verbally – use the telephone, ask questions, respond appropriately, read and write, articulate needs, hurts, desires
- Call for help if lost, threatened, bullied, exploited or abused
- Understand dangerous situations – crossing a street, unsafe places
- Attend to basic hygiene and household tasks – use appliances, prepare nutritious food, clean dwelling
- Understand money transactions
- Read common signs and traffic signals
- Seek and qualify for employment
- Manage time – set the alarm clock, follow daily schedule
- Use public transportation

INCLUSION

Dr. David Clayman (Published in FFDDnews.com 4/17/08 in article I submitted, “Advocacy Center Argues to Keep 10% Density Rule”):

"What is inclusion? Inclusion in what? Included how and for what purpose? For my developmentally disabled son, I want inclusion to mean included in a purposeful and meaningful life, full of emotions, dignity and opportunity. The 10% density rule denies that kind of inclusion by forcing him into the 'Normal' world where he cannot compete, where he is not wanted in many situations. We recognize seniors right to live in a manner that fulfills their desires. Why should my son have to live in a normal, 'mainstream' neighborhood where the neighbors cannot understand him, might fear him, and thus won't interact with him? Why should he be in a job situation where an employer cannot afford his low productivity and where his chance of holding a job is less than seven percent? Our children, teenagers and young adults with developmental disabilities need inclusion in situations and environments where they can be successful emotionally, socially behaviorally, intellectually and even spiritually. Clinging to quota rules denies these special citizens their rights to liberty and pursuit of happiness."

PPP: The term, "inclusion," means all citizens share the same rights and privileges, specifically, the right to live next to peers in a setting of choice. Our definition of inclusion is NOT based on a discriminatory distancing requirement which isolates and segregates individuals from each other, sets quotas and density restrictions. It does NOT **exclude** our citizens from the rights afforded to all other citizens to live next door to friends or in any community whether general or planned, to seek a lifestyle with recreational and educationally enriching opportunities in a safe environment if that is their CHOICE.

SEGREGATION

Per Susan Goldstein: Segregation is only segregation if it is forced, not if a disabled person chooses to live next door to someone like themselves. Right now in Florida, a disabled person does not have that choice.

PPP: Mandatory separation of individuals living in a group home from a larger group; forced isolation. Distancing requirements, quotas and density restrictions.

COMMUNITY

PPP: "the people with common interests living in a particular area; an interacting population of various kinds of individuals in a common location; social activity: FELLOWSHIP; a social state or condition." (Webster) Community is defined not just by where people live but how they interact.

The term, "community" is an ever expanding zoning phenomenon as populations grow -- all with varying community based zoning classifications including "planned unit developments." Statewide zoning ordinances encourage planned unit developments. These may be deed restricted subdivisions, intentional communities, retirement communities, 55+ communities, veterans' communities, etc., classified as residential.

Besides having a geographical connotation, "community" has a more significant meaning when people consider where they want to live based on shared interests, safety, meaningful activities, opportunities to learn, amenities, supports, social events, as well as opportunities for employment and access to transportation, stores, libraries, theatres, gyms, amusement parks, etc. This is particularly important for the more dependent population with developmental disabilities, particularly those with substantial or multiple cognitive impairments, who no longer can rely on their immediate family to be there for them forever "at home."

DISCRIMINATION

PPP: Treating any class of citizens differently from any other class; setting policy or rules for any particular class of citizens to restrict choice; setting boundaries for a class of citizens to choose where they may or may not live with quotas, density rules or distancing requirements.

We see an issue of discrimination and violation of Civil Rights when state governments or federally funded agencies:

- 1) restrict individual choice
- 2) deny equal rights to its citizens with developmental disabilities
- 3) design policy which segregates and isolates people with disabilities from friends and supports
- 4) use terms which are subjective and emotionally charged: "inclusion," "segregation," "least restrictive," "integration," "community," "institution"
- 5) use lobbying techniques to influence legislation based on misinformation in order to bolster an inherently discriminatory law

INTEGRATION

PPP: "Incorporation as equals into society or an organization of individuals of different groups." (Webster); equal opportunity to live among and share a life style with all members of society without boundaries; participating in mutually shared interests among members of a community; social participation in neighborhood events.

FORCED INTEGRATION

PPP: Absence of choice to live anywhere except in a community setting with distancing and boundary restrictions. (This is a violation of "the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities." ADA Title II). Forcing individuals to scatter within the greater community actually isolates them from their social network.