



Self-advocates with developmental disabilities come together to oppose proposed institution in Washington state

Jan 29, 2021 – For people with developmental or intellectual disabilities, living in an institution can have devastating effects. A new coalition called Shut Them Down has formed in response to Gov. Jay Inslee’s budget release, which has millions of dollars appropriated to build a new segregated institution for people with developmental disabilities in Washington state.

The coalition is made up of self-advocates from [People First of Washington](#), [Allies in Advocacy](#), [Self Advocates in Leadership](#) (SAIL) and others who stand for the rights of people with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Coalition members have developmental and intellectual disabilities themselves and some have lived in institutions.

Residents of Washington’s institutions have suffered harm and even death. Shut Them Down emphatically believes that individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities are better off living in the community.

Rather than build a new 120-bed nursing facility on the Fircrest campus in Shoreline, coalition members say the state should close its existing facilities. They say nursing facilities and hospitals should be used for temporary rehabilitation, not permanent housing for people with developmental disabilities.

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The following Shut Them Down coalition members are available for interviews:



Ivanova Smith, Chair, Self-Advocates in Leadership



Shawn Latham, Director, Allies in Advocacy



Michael Raymond, President, People First of Washington

Interviews can be scheduled through email by reaching out to Shawn Latham at admin@alliesinadvocacy.com or by phone through Krista Milhofer, People First of Washington Program Administrator at (253) 999-7222