



The Arc of Pennsylvania's Statement On the So-Called Haunted Attraction at Pennhurst

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HARRISBURG (PA): The Arc of Pennsylvania issues the following statement regarding a proposed haunted attraction on the grounds of the former Pennhurst State School and Hospital:

The Arc of Pennsylvania opposes in the strongest possible terms the proposed haunted attraction at the vacant Pennhurst State School and Hospital, a former institution for Pennsylvanians with intellectual and developmental disabilities, in East Vincent Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

The Arc of Pennsylvania's mission is to work to include all children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities in every community. Part of its mission requires The Arc to deal with the negative stereotypes advanced by ignorant parties. Creating a so-called haunted attraction is an abomination because it merely perpetuates such stereotypes about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and desecrates the memories of the Pennsylvania citizens who were forced to live there – segregated and isolated from their communities and families.

The Arc of Pennsylvania was an organizational plaintiff in the litigation that resulted in the closure of Pennhurst and guaranteed Pennhurst class members appropriate supports and services in the community. In Pennsylvania, over 50,000 individuals receive community-based supports and services, enabling them to live “everyday lives”, pursue their dreams and aspirations, and become active and participating members of society.

With respect to the vacant Pennhurst lot and buildings, we believe only tasteful and appropriate uses of the property should be considered, such as the placement of a university, health care facility, or community park, for example. Any so-called haunted attraction, especially one that profits from negative stereotypes of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, is simply not acceptable to The Arc of Pennsylvania.

The Arc was formed 61 years ago by a small group of parents who wanted more for their children with intellectual disabilities than an isolated life in a state institution. It has since grown into the largest member-driven advocacy movement in the nation. The Arc of Pennsylvania is affiliated with The Arc of the United States and 36 local chapters of The Arc serving 52 counties across the Commonwealth.

**Advocacy & resources for citizens with
intellectual & developmental disabilities & their families**