



**THE MASSACHUSETTS COALITION OF FAMILIES
AND ADVOCATES, Inc. (“COFAR”)**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor Strips Disabled People of Vital Dental Services

(Waltham, MA)— Due to Governor Patrick’s actions, the Tufts Dental Facilities (TDF) Clinic located on the campus of the Fernald Developmental Center in Waltham will close on June 30, 2010. The Fernald clinic is one of Tufts largest and most active sites, serving not only residents of Fernald, but over two thousand individuals in the metropolitan Boston area with intellectual disabilities who are unable to find dental care elsewhere. With the Governor’s plan to close Fernald, it was hoped that at least the dental clinic would be relocated, and there were plans for it to be sited on the campus of the Massachusetts Hospital School in Canton. But in the Governor’s budget the line item for Tufts Dental was completely eliminated, with no funding for relocating the clinic.

“It is bad enough that the Patrick Administration is planning to close Fernald, evict its residents and lay off staff, but now they are also denying crucial dental services both to Fernald residents and to approximately two thousand individuals throughout the community,” stated Thomas Frain, Esq., president of the Massachusetts Coalition of Families and Advocates, Inc. (COFAR). “Where will these people go now for dental services?”

The TDF Clinic at Fernald served as a training site for 4th year dental students and for hygienists, providing vital experience not only in dental medicine, but in working with this specialized population. People with cognitive disabilities often require sedation and other treatment not readily available in the private dental community. The clinic at Fernald is the hub of Tufts Dental Facilities programs statewide. The loss of this vital program is shocking, and its effects will reverberate throughout the state.

Established in 1983, COFAR is a statewide, non-profit organization that advocates for choice in and access to comprehensive and high quality care for persons with mental retardation/developmental disabilities. Visit us at www.COFAR.org