

Task Force on Adult Dependent Abuse Issues Final Report

John McCalley, head of the task force on Dependent Adults with Mental Retardation, appeared before the Joint House and Senate Government Oversight Committee to deliver the group's final report.

The task force was created in response to the alleged abuse of mentally retarded men working for Texas-based Henry's Turkey Service. The men were found living in a 100 year old school house in Atalissa. The home was closed by the State Fire Marshall due to multiple fire code violations.

Governor Culver's Executive Order 11 charged the members of the task force with developing recommendations pertaining to the identification, protection and caretaking of vulnerable Iowans.

Key Recommendations

The task force recommended several actions to improve dependent adult protection. The recommendations include:

- Require boarding houses to register the number of tenants and their dependency status with the state.
- Require DHS to improve record keeping of adult dependent abuse.
- Require all state agencies to utilize the same assessment tool in determining dependent adult status.
- Require joint interagency coordination in the investigation of all allegations against unlicensed health care facilities.

- Require the state labor department to develop and maintain a database of employers utilizing special certificates that enable employers to pay dependent workers less than the minimum wage.

- Implement a public awareness campaign regarding the protection of vulnerable citizens and the ability of people with disabilities to work in competitive jobs.

- Allow the task force to continue meeting through December 2009, to provide additional recommendations to the 2010 General Assembly.

The full report is available at <http://www.state.ia.us/elderalfairs/resources/DependentAdultTaskForce.html>.