



For Immediate Release

July 19, 2023

As authors of the [Designed to Fail](#) report **Disability Rights Tennessee (DRT) and Youth Law Center (YLC) oppose any plans by the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) to invest further funds in youth incarceration facilities** beyond the minimum necessary to keep youth from languishing in unsanitary and hazardous conditions. Our report recommended that DCS invest in early intervention and assessment services in order to *prevent* youth from being warehoused in dangerous prisons. Our follow-up report [Families Not Facilities](#) identified six specific recommendations for DCS to reform the juvenile justice system, the first of which was "Invest in proven, family-centered interventions, rather than ineffective, expensive, and dangerous facilities." We continue to call on DCS to invest in proven, family-centered interventions that will keep youth and communities safe, rather than wasting resources on ineffective and abusive youth prisons.

Review the Designed to Fail report: www.YLC.org/Designed-To-Fail/

Review the Families Not Facilities report: www.DisabilityRightsTN.org/Families-Not-Facilities-DCS-Report/

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Spokespeople from both organizations are available for comment.

For more information and for comment, contact:

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Disability Rights Tennessee (DRT) is the designated Protection & Advocacy (P&A) agency for Tennessee. DRT provides free legal advocacy services to protect the rights of Tennesseans with disabilities, and has broad access authority to monitor facilities, including juvenile justice facilities, and to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect.

The Youth Law Center is a non-profit law firm that advocates to transform foster care and juvenile justice systems across the nation so that every child and youth can thrive. For over 40 years, Youth Law Center has pursued policy and advocacy to protect the rights of youth in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems and to promote positive youth connections to community and family. The Youth Law Center is headquartered in San Francisco, California, with staff in Tennessee.