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## Budget cuts target our most vulnerable

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has proposed to eliminate or cut services for the developmentally disabled in California. It is shocking and disheartening to realize that the first efforts of the new administration to solve the budget crisis should be at the expense of our most vulnerable families.

As president of Community Association for Rehabilitation, a Palo Alto area agency that provides services for the developmentally disabled in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties, I am painfully aware of the limited resources currently available to support retarded children and their families. For 40 years, CAR, founded by parents, has been providing support services to such families, despite steadily decreasing state funding.

As an example, our respite care service sends trained caretakers into the home to give overburdened parents a few hours of relief from the constant demands of their handicapped child. As a pediatrician, I am intimately familiar with the stress that having a retarded child places upon family stability.

Our developmentally disabled children and their families may not have the political clout of better-funded interest groups. However, I ask you to consider what kind of a society we will be fostering in California if these cuts are approved.

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