

Friday, March 30, 2007 6:37 a.m.

Regarding Sheltered Workshops;

Dear Madams and Sirs:

I am a 55 year old white male and a defective. I take medicine. My medicine costs about \$75 a month. I used to take expensive medicine. You know, medicine they give you when nothing else has worked. \$2,000 a month worth. Medicine, and I took it, didn't keep me out of the psychiatric ward. Now that I am at Enrichment Industries East, a sheltered workshop, I haven't had to be hospitalized in 7 years. On economical medicine! That is a savings of \$161,700.

Furthermore, I used to go to the psychiatric ward every 4 months. In 1990 prices that amounts to about \$50,000 a year. It costs less than \$12,000 annually to send me to a sheltered workshop. Here, I contribute to the economy, make some money and socialize with a sympathetic staff and those who are like myself. Over a 7 year period taxpayers have saved 266 thousand dollars. That's me. There are over 200 clients at my workshop, Enrichment Industries East. Some have attended 18 years!

In the hospital we have occupational therapy We don't get payed for it consequently there is little enthusiasm for it. It is the "enticement" to speak freely. We color with magic markers, sew a wallet or paint a giant ashtray. We get to keep the pictures, lose the wallet, or use the giant ashtray. But at The workshop our work has value. We amke products that are much desired by society. By that virtue we become important. We feel good about ourselves and people who have high self esteem stay out of the hospital. In the private sector we must lie about our past, hide our medicine, and fib about psychiatric, laboratory and other mental health care appointments. At the workshop we network. We form friendships and bonds. We take care of each other. This is next to impossible in the private sector. At Enrichment Industries East we are a happy family. That's better mental health.

If I hadn't found Enrichment Industries East I would be stuck in my little room broke, smoking, overeating, returning to a pattern of idleness, to worry, to insomnia, to voices, to broken glass and off to a expensive month's stay in the psychiatric ward. And without having gone off my medication!

Sincerely,