

5/16/17 PRESS ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHO: ADAPT

WHAT: National ADAPT Calls On FDA To End Torture of Disabled People

WHERE: 10903 New Hampshire Avenue, Silver Spring, MD 20993

WHEN: Tuesday, May 16, 2017

ADAPT at FDA Seeking End to Torture of Disabled People

5/16/17 – Washington, DC. Several hundred members of the national disability rights organization ADAPT went to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) today to demand the immediate ban of electroshock devices known as aversives. The United Nations has condemned as torture the use of “aversives” on disabled people who are forced to attend the Judge Rotenberg Center (JRC) in Canton, Massachusetts. ADAPT held a protest last October in which over 200 advocates occupied the entrance to the JRC. ADAPT is known for its work to end institutionalization and its promotion life in the community and its leadership see this as part of that larger project.

“We cannot stand idly by while our brothers and sisters at the Rotenberg center are tortured right here on American soil,” Said Bruce Darling an organizer with ADAPT. “No person should be tortured just because they are disabled, which is what the FDA is allowing by refusing to ban these devices!”

The so-called ‘aversives’ that JRC uses include painful electric shocks from a device more powerful than a police taser, to control disabled people's behavior and punish them for something as small as getting out of seat without permission. Jennifer Msumba, a JRC survivor, has called the shocks “a stinging, ripping, and pulling pain that froze time.”

In 2014, the FDA proposed regulations which would ban the use of these electrical shock devices. The FDA has failed to finalize the rule, however, despite significant public comment from the disability community. President Trump in his first address to congress expressed frustration with the FDA approval process and its impact the lives of disabled people. It remains to be seen whether new FDA Director Scott Gottlieb, who was confirmed only last week, will follow through on President Trump’s promise, and act to protect disabled Americans from this abuse.

ADAPT’s history, the issues we are fighting for and our activities can be followed on our web site at www.adapt.org, our ADAPT Facebook page and on Twitter – look for #ADAPTandRESIST

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