



# ADAPT FREE OUR PEOPLE!



It is appalling – and truly un-American – that disabled citizens are forced into unwanted institutional placement where they are routinely denied the fundamental liberties promised to them in the Declaration of Independence and guaranteed to them under the Constitution. It is even worse that some of these disabled individuals – including children with disabilities – have been placed in a facility that literally tortures them with electric shocks and other painful aversives.

The use of contingent electric shock devices is an inhumane practice that has never been appropriate and has always constituted an unscientific and unethical practice. It has been replaced by supporting people with disabilities with approaches that do not involve painful, violent aversives. Even so, they are still used in one facility in the United States – the Judge Rotenberg Center in Canton, Massachusetts – that has refused to end this barbaric practice.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has released a proposed rule to ban the use of such electrical shock devices, however, the FDA – under the Obama Administration – failed to finalize the rules that it began considering in 2014.

In his first address to Congress, President Trump recognized the impact that delays in the FDA approval process have on some disabled individuals when he invited Megan Crowley, a disabled college student with a rare disease, to be his special guest at the address. With the confirmation of the FDA Director last week, the agency is poised to address this critical issue. Should the agency not act immediately, the further delay will result in the continuation of the daily torture of disabled Americans – including children with disabilities – at the Judge Rotenberg Center.

**Today, ADAPT demands that Alex M. Azar II, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, immediately:**

- **STOP THE TORTURE of disabled Americans by instructing the FDA to finalize the proposed rules banning the use of shocking devices (Docket Number FDA-2016-N-1111), and**
- **Coordinate a public press event by HHS/FDA in cooperation with ADAPT that highlights the disability-led organizations, including the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, which have tirelessly campaigned to end the barbaric practices of the Judge Rotenberg Center.**