

Birmingham residents rally for mental health

By Al Ratcliffe

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (WIAT) — Since 2008, mental agencies and departments in the state of Alabama have lost \$40 million, and most of the hospitals have closed in favor of other treatment options.

Now, those options are being threatened and many rallied today say if these cuts go forward, it will have a huge impact on Alabamians with developmental needs.

“Closing those programs will create a serious human needs crisis in Alabama. It will reduce public safety. Put homeless, mentally ill people on the streets of every city and town in Alabama,” said Richard Craig, Mental Health Authority.

Jackie Langlow is a mom with a 26-year-old autistic son. She knows the state is in a problem, but she said this isn't the way to deal with this.

“I do understand budget constraints and I do understand that is a difficult and arduous process. But doing the right thing is not complicated. It may be hard. But it's not complicated,” said Langlow.

These cuts will impact almost 6000 people.

“If the cuts happened, then the government is going to have to take complete care of individuals with developmental disabilities. And that means they’ll have to open up institutions again,” said Brittany Gore of People First of Alabama.

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