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Press Release

September 15, 2015

Disability Rights Vermont (DRVT) announces the release of an *Investigative Report on the Death of Annette Douglas on January 9, 2015 while in the Custody of the Vermont Department of Corrections.*

This report identifies individual and systemic problems that may have contributed to Ms. Douglas' death less than two weeks after being admitted into the correctional facility with a number of physical and mental health diagnoses. The report provides specific recommendations for changes in Department of Corrections' policy and practice that should be implemented immediately to prevent similar tragedies in the future. DRVT also believes that firm disciplinary actions with DOC and Contracted personnel are justified and that all staff who work with prisoners with disabilities and/or tenuous health conditions should be trained in proper care and humane treatment.

Disability Rights Vermont (DRVT) is the federally authorized disability protection and advocacy system in Vermont pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 10801 et seq., as well as being the Mental Health Care Ombudsman for the State of Vermont pursuant to 18 V.S. A. §7259. Under these mandates DRVT investigated Ms. Douglas' death and reached conclusions regarding errors and policy violations that occurred directly contributing to her death that we believe should be shared with the public in order to draw attention to the problems facing people with disabilities in our Correctional System.

We release this report to you with the consent of the administrator of Ms. Douglas' Estate. DRVT is available to answer questions regarding the issues raised by the report. For further information please call Ed Paquin or A.J. Ruben at 1-800-834-7890.

The investigative report can be found attached and on:

http://www.disabilityrightsvt.org/pressroom/investigative_reports.html

Thank you for your consideration of this information.

Defending and Advancing the rights of people with disabilities & mental health issues, and of the Deaf.