

**Testimony of Marcheale Davis
& the Board of Directors of Center for Disability Rights
Human Services Subcommittee of Appropriations Committee
February 19, 2020**

Hello Honorable Member of the Appropriations Committee;

My name is Marcheale Davis and I am the current Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Center for Disability Rights and the President of the Membership. I have been involved with the CDR for the last 6 years. I deeply value the mission of the CDR, as it has encouraged me to work together to further expand the advocacy and services that effect the everyday lives of those with disabilities.

As a person with a visual impairment, I can testify on how the Center for Disability Rights has helped me and how it has influenced my life. I believe the largest impact the CDR has made for me is that it has pushed me to fight for the civil and equal rights for all people, as well as equal opportunity and independence. The CDR has not only given me the freedom to advocate for rights, but to promote alongside a community of people who share the same or various disabilities.

I want to thank the Governor for not cutting the ILCs from his budget; however, we need more funding in order to maintain our level of services around the State.

While we sincerely appreciate that the level of funding will be the same as last year, as well as the funding for deaf services, we are unable to efficiently provide the level of service we want to meet the needs of consumers in our service area that we are supposed to be covering. CDR and our sister Centers are great organizations for people with disabilities, and through the years our work and services have saved a significant amount of money for the State, as a large portion of our services prevented people from going into institutions.

My hope as a President and as a consumer, is that you will consider increasing the CORE funding for the Centers for Independent Living so we are able to continue providing the same great level of services, or even enhance them.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony. Please consider increasing the funding for our CORE and Deaf services to make it possible for our great services to reach everyone who needs it.

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