

IN SUPPORT OF
H.B. # 6439
AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE
BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2023 AND MAKING
APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

SUBJECT MATTER

**Governor's Proposed FY 2022-2023 Budget for General Government A and General
Government B Agencies**

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Richard Famiglietti of East Haven CT. I work for the Center for Disability Rights (CDR) located in West haven CT. I am testifying today in support of funding the Independent Living centers (ILC's) \$5.5 million so we can continue to help people with disabilities live better and productive lives.

Prior to my employment at CDR I was a consumer. CDR connected me with the Tech-Act project enabling me to purchase hand controls for a car, assisted me with resolving Medicaid eligibility issue and also allowed me to be part of a legislative task force for Medicaid for the Employed Disabled program (S-05) which was implemented in Oct of 2000.

I was hired as a community advocate at CDR on October 10th, 2000. In 2002 I accepted the position as a Transition Coordinator (t/c) for the FIRST nursing facility transition program. Until recently I was a t/c supervisor for the current nursing facility transition program MFP. Now I am serving as programs manager.

If someone did not tell me about the Center for Disability Rights, those chain of events would never happen and I would still be home collecting SSDI, SNAP, section 8 etc.... Appropriate funding to Independent Living Centers can change lives. I am just one example.

ILC services help prevent nursing home placement, transition people back home from n/f and out of shelters, connect consumers to technology, assisting with

vocational and employment services are just some of the ways ILC save CT dollars while improving lives.

FY- 2019-2020 ILC's transitioned 93 people back to homes in the community saving CT \$6M (SEE FLYER).

Over the years ILC state funds have been reduced. CT funding to ILC's are 3-5 times **LESS** dollars than the ILC centers in MA, RI & NY.

Below are some of the results of the cuts received over the years which affected what, how and where we provide services.

1. **Reduced catchment area. CDR was only serving 5 towns when we normally cover the New Haven County.**
2. **When I started employment at CDR we had 9 full time core staff and 3 part time staff. Some dedicated to specific programs like the tech-act project. Now we have 4 core staff.**
3. **ILC provided advocacy skills training to our consumer base, organized our consumers to attend public hearings and forums. We don't do that anymore.**
4. **Reduced outreach to provide information or services to underserved population or areas.**
5. **No cost-living increase to salary in several years for both core and mfp funded programs resulting in loss of good staff. We do real work pay us.**

Since the covid19 pandemic, calls and service requests have increased by 51%. ILC are also assisting with covid relief via cares act. Calls continue to increase.

I/we are asking CT to fund ILC appropriately so we can continue to save CT dollars by empowering people with disabilities to live, work and yes pay taxes and live not just survive.

2016 report by the Indiana Business Research Center determined 5.5M is the true cost to fund ILC in CT. See report at cacil.net/il-funding-formula

FUND ILC's. We are asking for 5.5M to fund all 5 ILC's We are worth it!!

**Submitted by
Richard Famiglietti
East Haven CT 06512**



Fund the 5 ILCs at \$550K each

Connecticut's 5 Independent Living Centers (ILCs) help people of all ages, with all types of disabilities, live independently in the community.

A 2016 report conducted by the Indiana Business Research Center concluded that \$5.5M is the true cost to fully fund CT's ILCs - permitting them to meet the needs in the state & identified a minimum base level of state funding of \$550K per ILC. To access the report:

cacil.net/il-funding-formula

The ILCs are currently receiving \$312,972 in state funding which funds all 5 ILCs. This level of funding is the result of many years of funding cuts.

CT provides the lowest amount of state funding to its ILCs compared to our adjacent states.

Funding Per ILC/Year:

Massachusetts - \$714,612
 New York - \$334,025
 Rhode Island - \$302,560
 Connecticut - \$62,594

In 2020, due to COVID-19, the ILCs had a 51% increase in requests for services & we anticipate further increases in 2021.

ILCs Save the State Money

In FY 19-20, the ILCs transitioned 93 people out of nursing facilities, **saving the state more than \$6M** & saving lives.

The ILCs helped hundreds avoid costly institutions.

Employment services help people get and keep jobs.

CT Association of Centers for Independent Living www.cacil.net

What are the Independent Living Centers?

ILCs are non-residential organizations that empower people with disabilities through information, counseling and support services:

- Develop lifelong independent living skills;
- Find and maintain housing in their community;
- Develop job readiness skills and accessing employment;
- Transition out of nursing facilities through Money Follows the Person (MFP) and other ILC programs;
- Gain access to services that prevent the need for placement in a nursing facility;
- Connect to appropriate technology to support independent living;
- Access health care & community supports, recreation, transportation and other resources, and services that promote independence;
- Get benefits counseling;
- Advocate for themselves and others.

Access Independence
 80 Ferry Blvd; Stratford

Center for Disability Rights
 369 Highland Street; West Haven

Disabilities Network of Eastern CT
 19 Ohio Avenue; Norwich

Independence Northwest
 1183 New Haven Road; Naugatuck

Independence Unlimited
 151 New Park Avenue; Hartford