

Testimony of Brian Naylor
March 3, 2021

Increase Funding for Centers for Independent Living

My name MSgt Brian Naylor, USAF retired, and I am employed by Independence Northwest Inc, one of five Centers for Independent Living (CIL) in CT. As a 30-year retired veteran, my current job as Veterans/Independent Living Advocate is to assist aging veterans with VA benefits, Medicare CHOICES, Medicare Saving Program, obtaining and presenting the CT Wartime Service Medals, and a host of other personal needs that may be requested by veterans and their families. Currently, I am the only Veterans Advocate in the CIL state network and have seen an increasing need for personal basic veteran's needs, especially ones seeking assistance during the pandemic

The CIL's employ a diverse group of individuals with disabilities and real world experiences to be sure that other people in similar circumstances have a voice and an advocate that can relate to their needs. Our programs include services for Veterans, deaf and hearing impaired, youth transitions services, emergency food, an assistive technology program to help with isolated people during the pandemic, and Money Follows the Person.

In closing, during my 8 plus years in this position I have seen people with dire needs, grown in my own sensitivity and have been able to assist countless Veterans and seniors on a personal basis. Please do not cut the Centers for Independent Living, in fact I ask that you increase their funding to a minimum of 550,000 per CIL.

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