

TESTIMONY OF SANDRA ROBERTS  
TO HUMAN SERVICE SUBCOMMITTEE OF APPROPRIATIONS  
MARCH 3, 2021  
RE: CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

My name is Sandra Roberts and I am testifying on behalf of the Centers for Independent Living. I have been involved with the Center for Disability Rights in West Haven, CT both as a staff person and as a consumer for 31 years.

We appreciate the funding that we have received but our CORE funding has been eroding through the years. This has not been enough to assist us in meeting the needs of consumers in our service area. This is very concerning. My current role at Center for Disability Rights is part-time information and referral advocate. We receive numerous phone calls for assistance with advocacy and independent living skills training. In 2020, due to the Covid-19 the ILCs experienced a 51% increase in requests for assistance. In 2021 we expect the requests for assistance to only grow. When the need is more involved it becomes more difficult because we do not have the staff coverage to really go see consumers in the field and with COVID-19 we cannot see consumers in person. Centers for Independent Living actually saves the state money as we assist in filling the gaps in services that other agencies cannot provide. We prevent people with disabilities from being placed in nursing homes which would have cost the state of Connecticut an immense amount of money. It is estimated that last year the ILCs saved the state more than 6 million dollars by transitioning 93 people out of health care facilities. In one study conducted by Indiana Business Research Center, they concluded that \$5.5M is the true cost to fully fund ILCs in Connecticut. The minimum base level is \$550,000 per Center which is what we are requesting so we can fully serve our consumers.

We thank you for taking the time to hear our testimony and please consider increasing our CORE funding.

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