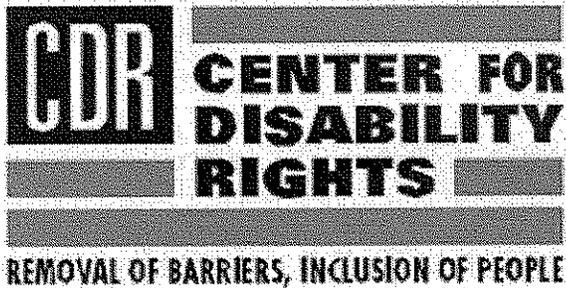


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764-A Campbell Avenue  
West Haven, CT 06516

Voice: 203-934-7077

Fax: 203-934-7078

TDD: 203-934-7079

[www.centerfordisabilityrights-ct.org](http://www.centerfordisabilityrights-ct.org)

**Human Service Subcommittee of Appropriations  
Hearing Date: February 11, 2010**

**Testimony of Marc Anthony Gallucci, Esq.  
Executive Director  
Center for Disability Rights**

Honorable Co-Chairs Senator Toni Harp; Representative Gail Hamm;  
Representative Peter Villano, and other members of the Subcommittee:

I have come tonight to testify and educate you about the consequences of not restoring the funding of Connecticut's five Centers for Independent Living. My Testimony is in support of testimony given by the Connecticut Association of Centers for Independent Living and the Connecticut State Independent Living Council, but is specifically focused on Center for Disability Rights that serves New Haven and Middlesex counties.

In the last reporting year, CDR responding to over 2000 Connecticut citizens who called or visited us, and we provided information, referral, technical assistance, advocacy, and other services to them. Of these, 133 were folks who had multiple and serious needs, and we provided more long term and intensive services to them.

CDR is also an integral part of the State's Money Follows the Person Project and works with dozens of folks who are stuck in nursing homes to transition back out into the community. We also operate the Community Choices ADRC in partnership with the Area Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut. This ADRC is diverting people from nursing homes, and like the MFP, it is saving the State significant Medicaid dollars.

We can't do this if you take away the State CORE IL funds which enable us to house, heat, light, and maintain the Center and support the staff who do this valuable work with administration, supplies, printing, telecommunications, e-mail, training, database management, and etc....

As I am sure my colleagues will also testify, we need to dispel the myth that CT's five CILs will not be affected by the cuts because there are ARRA dollars available to them. First, the ARRA dollars are not enough to offset the proposed State cuts. Second, the ARRA dollars will not get into the Centers' accounts until Summer time probably; and yet, we have been relying on State funding since we started the fiscal year last July. And third, the ARRA dollars for CDR are intended to hire new staff open satellite offices in Middletown and the Shoreline – two areas that are far from our West Haven headquarters, and which are not getting the full benefit of our Center.

As a result of the rescissions and proposed cuts, CDR already has laid off two staff persons, and we have cut back the hours on a third. We are now left with only a handful of staff. We now no longer have support staff, and we have lost our interpreter for the Deaf. If these cuts go through, we will have to withdraw our plan to serve Middletown and the Shoreline areas with satellite services, and our ability to do the good and valuable work you want us to do with the MFP and ADRC is placed in serious jeopardy.

I have one final point that I would like to make, and it is a point I make every year up here in the LOB: why would you cut the CILs when 1) they are the State's tool for controlling Medicaid expenses; 2) they provide crucial services to people at risk; and 3) they have played no role in the massive expansion of State spending (we have essentially flat funding since 1989)?

Please restore Centers for Independent Living line item to its full amount.

Thank you.