Testimony of Lisamay Cleary-Cast
Appropriations Sub-Committee Public Hearing
February 22,2013
Department of Rehabilitation Services Budget

Restore Funding to CT'S Independent Living Centers

I am proud to say I am a part of the staff at one of the Independent Living Centers in Connecticut. Our approach as an Agency is based on two fundamental principles: to ensure equal access and equal opportunity and to empower people with all types of physical and mental health disabilities. This approach helps people to achieve greater independence so that they can lead fuller and more satisfying lives.
I am both a Housing Coordinator and Independent Living Advocate.
As a Housing Coordinator for the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program, I assist consumers in skilled nursing facilities and other institutions to return to life in the community with services and supports to live safe, successful, and fulfilling lives in the community of their choice. "Choice" being the key word.

Last year, CIL's transitioned 164 people with disabilities from nursing homes to community living, saving the state approximately $4.4 million dollars.

As an Independent Living Advocate I work one-to one with those who are working on goals to lead more independent lives. These goals can take on many different forms to meet the individuals' unique needs reaching towards the ultimate goal of individual self-advocacy with limited ongoing support and guidance.

By eliminating CIL' s thousands of people with physical and mental health disabilities will be unable to receive vital support and advocacy services.

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