

TESTIMONY TO THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
PLEASE RESTORE FUNDING TO CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING  
LISA ABBEY JAMES  
28 DENSLOW ROAD  
GLASTONBURY, CT

Good evening thank you for allowing me to speak. I am Lisa Abbey James and I live in Glastonbury, CT. I am speaking for myself as a concerned citizen of the 13th district. I am here today to request that you restore funding for the five centers for independent living. The centers provide crucial services to people with all types of disabilities of all ages and to all areas of the state. One of the services the centers provide is information and referral. This service is crucial for recently injured people with disabilities. I took part in the spinal cord support group at Independence Unlimited when I first became injured. It felt great to talk with others who were in the exact same circumstances as myself. Independence Unlimited helped me problem solve many of my disability issues. I have found life-long friends through the center. Because of this comradery, I am now a certified peer mentor for the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation. I have learned how important and helpful it is to talk and share the knowledge I have with others who have paralysis.

If funding for the CILs is eliminated there will be severe reduction of vital independent living services to people with disabilities who will face cost costly institutionalization due to lack of independent living services. When I heard about the Gov. proposed budget with zeros in places for Independent Living services I was shocked and outraged.

If funding is not restored, people with disabilities will not get the independent living skills we need to live independently in our communities. This saves so much money for the State.

Thank you for your time.

Lisa Abbey James