

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING  
WEDNESDAY**

**Date: March 27, 2013**

**Time: 3:00 P.M.**

**HR D**

HB 2971 \*\* Public Hearing and Possible work Session \*\*Subsequent Referral(s) to Ways and Means

FIRST PUBLIC HEARING: Appropriates moneys from General Fund to Department of Human Services for enhancing and expanding services provided by centers for independent living to individuals with disabilities.

**Public Testimony: Representatives from Oregon's Centers for Independent Living**

**Barry Fox-Quamme**

A Person Experiencing Disability

Independent Living Resources (LILA), Executive Director

IL Core Services Offered to Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties

WIN Services Also Offered to Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook, Hood River, Wasco & Sherman

Association of Oregon Centers for Independent Living (AOCIL), President

CIL Representative to the State Independent Living Council (SILC)

Executive CIL to CIL Mentor, Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL)

**Kirt Tombs**

A Person Experiencing Disability

Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (EOCIL), Executive Director

IL Core Services Offered to Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union,

Wallowa and Wheeler Counties. Limited services for Hood River, Sherman and Wasco

Association of Oregon Centers for Independent Living (AOCIL), Board Member

**Sheila Thomas**

A Person Experiencing Disability

Lane Independent Living Alliance (LILA) Executive Director

IL Core Services Offered to Lane County

WIN Services and Employment related services Also Offered to Marion, Polk, Yamhill, Linn, Benton and Lincoln counties.

Association of Oregon Centers for Independent Living (AOCIL), Vice President

CIL Representative to the State Independent Living Council (SILC)

Good Afternoon Chair Tomei, Committee Members,

My name is Barry Fox-Quamme and I am from Gresham. I am joined today by Sheila Thomas from Eugene and Kirt Tombs from Ontario.

We are here today to testify to the tremendous outcomes that Centers for Independent Living realize each year to benefit people with disabilities in Oregon.

We are here to present you with a modern day fairy tale come to life.

Most of us are familiar with the magical story of spinning straw into gold. CILs across Oregon have been transforming budget dust into gold bars and saving Oregonians millions of dollars each year for more than a decade! And especially over the past four years.

As we visited with members of the legislature this session, many observed that in asking for \$1.88 million in new funding for CILs (above the \$720,000 in current SGF) that HB 2971 is asking for budget dust and that it may be hard to get members attention.

Thank you for listening to our voices! We hope that our gold bar outcomes do the trick!

While our funding request may seem small in some circles, please be assured that \$1.88 million is very significant to the lives of people with disabilities in Oregon. We are strong stewards of these funds and would like to show you today how we are already creating golden outcomes and why added investment is a wise decision.

**Centers for Independent Living** are unique ~ we rise from the Civil Rights Movement. We are people with disabilities serving people with disabilities. We are grass-roots, community-based non-profits, united around a national vision of consumer direction, consumer control.

The majorities of our staff and board members are people who experience disability. We offer peer-based services that empower us all toward independence and self-advocacy! As the slogan goes ~ "Nothing about us without us!"

**Since we are grass-roots, peer-based systems, we are able to produce an 800% return on investment** (VR Presentation to Joint Ways & Means Committee 2013).

For each of us at this table and for each of us gathered in this room from across the state today, this is very personal. Yet we are a different voice, as we not only speak of community need, but we present successful solutions based on self-advocacy!

- We have people here who have overcome extended disability to beat the odds and return to full-time employment. More than 95% of people with disabilities who are out of work due to disability for more than six months never return to the workforce.

I am an exception to this statistic. I was disabled by on-going complications from meningitis in 1998-1999, was unemployed as a result for more than 9 months before

returning to consulting part-time, and then to a ½ time job after 18 months. Today I am a peer to those we serve, an executive director of a CIL, and a national mentor.

- We have people in the room who through the assistance of peer mentors at CILs have stabilized lives in crisis, found peer supports and returned to work!
- We have people served by CIL staff who have turned an AIDS diagnosis into stable health with no detectible virus and returned to work. (EOCIL)
- We have people with significant lifetime disabilities who with CIL supports have achieved higher education degrees and developed private practices that now serve all people in the community as professional health care and mental health providers.
- We have people facing illiteracy in Douglas County who are learning to read and becoming job ready through the Roseburg CIL's (UVdN) creative mentoring projects.
- We have peers in Lane County (LILA) working in mental health circles and with the local CCO to pilot peer support services to help people with mental illness manage their recovery and avoid re-admissions to the hospital.

CIL Services provided between 2008 and 2011 increased in Oregon by 109%, as we saw services provided go from 5,688 to 11,863 (2013 VR Presentation to Joint Ways & Means).

At a cost of \$219 per consumer served, per biennium, or \$110 per year, we hope that you will see the tremendous value that CIL services provide as an investment in the health and vitality of the people of Oregon!

Adding \$1.88 million dollars to CIL funding for the next biennium will 1) ensure stable base funding for EOCIL and LILA, 2) add modest increases to service funding for the seven Oregon CILs (\$75,000 a year), and 3) support our statewide efforts to pursue plans to bring CIL services to the 14 counties currently not served by CILs. (CIL Service map)

While I could go on for hours introducing you to the innovative work that we do ~ those golden bars ~ I want to leave time for you to hear briefly from my colleagues.

- Kirt Tombs, Executive Director for Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living, will present one of many programs underway at EOCIL, The HIV/AIDS Project, and
- Sheila Thomas, Executive Director for Lane Independent Living Alliance (LILA) will briefly present an overview of The Keystone Project, a LILA collaboration with the Peace Health Behavioral Health Inpatient unit (Johnson Unit) and funded by the local CCO, Trillium, to provide Peer Support Services (PSS) just prior to and following discharge from the Unit.

We look forward to your questions and comments and perhaps for an opportunity for others here to share their stories of transformation and success.

