

Submitter: Sheila Thomas

On Behalf Of: Centers for Independent Living

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Human Services

Measure: HB5026

March 2, 2023

In support of HB 5026

Co-Chair Campos; Co-Chair Valderrama and Committee Members:

On behalf of the LILA Board of Directors:

LILA is a non-residential, consumer-controlled, cross-disability Center for Independent Living (CIL) serving Lane County. We are guided by the Independent Living philosophy, that everyone should be as self-sufficient as possible. Our primary mission is to foster the independence of people with disabilities, including taking responsibility for personal choices. CILs are directly involved in providing peer delivered services on a cross-disability basis. We take a holistic view of the consumer – listening to their needs and working with them on their individual life goals. Our staff of peers are uniquely prepared to support and mentor the consumer as they move towards independence.

CILs have not had a meaningful increase in funding for ten years and it is becoming increasingly difficult to retain exceptional staff and to attract and hire new staff. LILA is fortunate to be supported by employees who experience disability and who are passionate about the services they provide. Nevertheless, maintaining that important quality of disability knowledge and lived experience cannot be sustained at the current level of funding. People with disabilities deserve to receive equitable pay with benefits.

I respectfully request that the committee funds the 2.6-million-dollar request for CIL Pay Equity.

Sincerely,

Sheila Thomas, MA
Executive Director