



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Thursday, April 28, 2016

CONTACT:
Daria Smith, 860-681-7599
daria@ctsilc.org

People with disabilities may wait 6 to 12 months to receive assistance Centers for Independent Living to substantially reduce service area

HARTFORD, CT – Thursday, April 28, 2016. Today, Senator Ted Kennedy, Jr., Senator Joe Markley and Representative Cathy Abercrombie joined over 40 disability advocates and consumers for a press conference with the CT State Independent Living Council (CT-SILC) and the CT Association of Centers for Independent Living (CACIL) to discuss CT's Centers for Independent Living.

The CT-SILC and CACIL announced that services for people with disabilities will be severely reduced, if the \$528,680 in state funding is eliminated. In Governor Malloy's most recent budget proposal, the line item for Centers for Independent Living is eliminated. If funding is removed, consumers of Centers will be waiting 6 to 12 months to receive assistance and services and during this waiting period, people with disabilities may lose their employment, housing and be placed in costly nursing facilities.

In addition, Centers for Independent Living will substantially reduce the cities and towns served. Since 1988, the five Centers have served all the 169 cities and towns of Connecticut. With the proposed funding elimination, Centers will serve only a total of

25 cities and towns (Branford, Bridgeport, Cheshire, Clinton, East Hartford, Essex, Guilford, Groton, Hartford, Killingworth, Madison, Manchester, Middlebury, Naugatuck, New London, Norwich, Old Saybrook, Prospect, Stratford, Trumbull, Waterbury, West Hartford, Westbrook, Wethersfield, and Windham). As partners in the Money Follows the Person demonstration, CT's Centers for Independent Living transitioned 233 individuals out of nursing facilities, saving the State of Connecticut over \$10.3 million in 2015, almost 20 times the annual CILs state funding allocation.

"If the state funding is eliminated, I fear for the future," said Eileen Healy, Chairperson of the CT Association of Centers for Independent Living. "People with disabilities will not be served and ultimately, this will cost the state more by increasing Medicaid and Unemployment costs and even greater reliance on costly state funded services with fewer people maximizing their independence."

In 2015, CILs provided over **17,000** contacts with disability related information & referral services; **2533** people with disabilities with independent living skills training, peer counseling, advocacy, youth & educational services, among other vital support services; **128** people with disabilities with services to obtain & maintain employment; **558** people with disabilities with services to obtain & maintain affordable & accessible housing; and **422** people with disabilities received services that prevented institutionalization.

"After working with the Center for Independent Living, I reached many of my goals," stated Nakeitha Rose, a consumer. "Namely, I got a new wheelchair; I now have health insurance, and have started physical therapy again. Since working with the Center for Independent Living, I have hope again. It is a good feeling knowing that someone is there to have my back when I really need it."