



Tri-County Independent Living Center, Inc.

680 E. Market Street, Suite 205
Akron, OH 44304-1640

(330) 762-0007 - Voice

(330) 762-7416 - FAX

Dial 711 - Relay

Website: www.tcilc.org

E-mail: tcilc@ohio.net

Testimonial of John Ballard, Executive Director

Tri-County Independent Living Center, Inc.

Akron, Ohio

March 13, 2017

Chairman Romanchuk and Distinguished Committee Members, as the Executive Director of the Tri-County Independent Living Center, Inc. (TCILC), I am asking for your consideration to reinstate the CIL line item (415520) to the state budget.

TCILC has provided Independent Living Services to individuals with disabilities residing in Portage, Stark or Summit County since 1985. We also provide adult transition services to residents of Medina and Wayne Counties. We are one of 12 Independent Living Centers in Ohio providing the following services to Ohioans with disabilities designed to help them live independently in the community:

Information and Referral

Individual and Systems Advocacy

Peer Support

Independent Living Skills Training

Nursing Home Transition

We have assisted over 30,000 Ohioans with disabilities to live, worship, work and raise their families with dignity in the communities of their choice. Further, we have enabled the taxpayers of Ohio to save hard earned tax dollars as well. Why should Ohioans pay more for residential alternatives which are more restrictive and costly than required?

SERVICES ADVOCACY SOCIAL CHANGE

Serving People With Disability - Summit, Stark, Portage Counties

Funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, Dept. of Health & Human Services,
and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

I have witnessed tremendous improvements over the last 45 years in Ohio's services and supports for individuals with disabilities. As one who volunteered at Apple Creek Developmental Center, Columbus DC, Orient DC, Gallipolis DC, Mt. Vernon DC and the Cleveland DC in the 1970's, I would like to thank the State of Ohio for decades of tremendous progress. In 1977, I worked in Ohio's first independent living program for individuals transitioning to the community from Apple Creek DC, situated in the 34th District at Alpha Phi Alpha's Channelwood Village complex. This was one of many community programs that were funded in response to the Federal Consent Decree in Seidel vs. Moritz, as the State agreed to transition 400 individuals out of Apple Creek. With experience and training, most of the individuals we served from Apple Creek went on to live in their own apartments, while some resided in small group homes, with on-going support as needed from the Independent Living Center. At the time, the per diem cost was \$12/day vs. the reported cost of \$180/day at Apple Creek. This program and others that followed around the State have enabled thousands of individuals with developmental disabilities to live in the community, at a significant year over year cost savings. With the indispensable support of the Independent Living Centers, these individuals and others have been able to remain in the community for years. It is hard to describe how wonderful it is to see individuals who I once visited in a state institution, now living, working and contributing to my community.

Over the years through my work at Ohio ARC, Summit County Board of DD and now Tri-County ILC, I have had the opportunity to work with or nearby many Ohioans who stood with their constituents with disabilities and helped make Ohio a better home for all. Although many are no longer with us, I want to thank a few of them today: Sen. Oliver Ocasek, Rep. Cliff Skeen, Rep. Anthony Celebrese Jr., Sen. Thomas Van Meter, Sen. Stanley Aronoff, Rep. William Batchelder, Sen. Tom Sawyer, Sen. Kim Zurz, Sen. Tim McCormick, then Rep. Mary Taylor, Sen. Roy Ray, Sen. Vernon Sykes, Sen. Kirk Schuring, and my good friend and faculty advisor Rep. Vern Cook, gone 30 years now, with apologies to hundreds of others.

Thank you.