



Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council

670 Morrison Road, Suite 200
Gahanna, Ohio 43230
Voice/TTY (614) 892-0390
Fax (614) 861-0392
Toll Free/TTY 1-800-566-7788
www.ohiosilc.org

Testimony of Kay L. Grier, Executive Director

Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council (OSILC)

House Finance Subcommittee on Health and Human Services

Monday, March 13, 2017

Chairman Romanchuk, Ranking Minority Member Sykes, and distinguished committee members, my name is Kay L. Grier and I am the Executive Director of the Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council (OSILC). I am pleased to present information for your consideration.

HISTORY

The Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council (OSILC) establishes the overall strategy for and monitors the goals and objectives established within that State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). OSILC works to provide a statewide network of independent living services and supports so that people with disabilities can independently live, work and participate in their communities. All of OSILC'S activities occur within the guiding principles of consumer control, peer support, self-help, equal access, self-determination and individual and systems advocacy.

The federal government requires all states to have a Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) in order for the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in the state to be eligible for federal IL funds. The federal requirements for SILCs were originally established under the Rehabilitation Act, but are now set out in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). OSILC was established as an independent agency within state government in 1992 through a Governor's Executive Order. Subsequent Governors have issued successive Executive Orders maintaining OSILC as an independent state agency. OSILC consists of seven voting members, all of whom are appointed by the Governor and at least 51% of those members are people with disabilities.

I am submitting written testimony today seeking your support for two critical needs: increased funding for independent living services in Ohio and for the OSILC.

There are currently 12 local centers for independent living (CILs) in Ohio. Historically, the CILs use to receive state GRF dollars directly through a line item in the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities budget. These funds were critical to providing independent living services to individuals with disabilities. I am asking your consideration in reinstating this line item (415-520) and to add \$1.7 million dollars to bring Ohio in line with other states in the region.

Providing independent living services to assist individuals with disabilities to live independently is a wise use of resources. Funding provided to CILs keeps individuals out of nursing homes and institutions which are much costlier than assisting someone to live independently in a house or apartment.

Ohio ranks at the very bottom in the amount of state dollars allocated for independent living services in comparison to other states in our region. I am asking you to support establishing a line item and adding the appropriate funding.

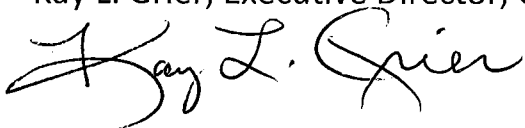
Furthermore, OSILC is requesting that state GRF dollars be restored in LINE ITEM 415-402 of the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities budget to \$450,000, an increase of approximately \$200,000. This requests restores OSILC's level of funding to that amount that it was in 2009. This level of funding will provide OSILC with the necessary funds to effectively assist the 12-CILs and provide comprehensive technical assistance to them.

Moreover, OSILC will be able to hire a data collection administrator to drive the data collection system that is in place through the Net/CIL system and to show a return on investment utilizing statistics from a number of different sources and produce an annual report demonstrating the efficacy of independent living services in Ohio.

On behalf of individuals with disabilities, I am requesting your consideration and support of these two critical funding requests.

Respectfully submitted,

Kay L. Grier, Executive Director, Ohio Statewide Independent Living Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kay L. Grier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "K".