

February 29, 2023

Dear CO-Chair Compos; Co-Chair Valderrama and Committee Members,

I want to convey my experiences receiving CIL services from 2014, 2015, and 2019. In 2013, I had a stroke that left me disabled, with cognitive deficits, Statutorily Blind (legally blind), and difficulty processing through employment.

I received ongoing Independent Living Skills from LILA (Lane Independent Living Alliance) in Eugene, Oregon. While living in Eugene, in 2014, my CIL services began. I received job readiness skills that included time management and understanding my disabilities, and how to navigate working again. After that, I received Work Incentive Network services to help stay compliant with the SSA while working from SSDI benefits.

In 2015, I received Peer to Peer services from LILA and became an employee at LILA. Later on, in 2019, I was given working accommodations related to my legal blindness. That included Assistive Technology, office mobility, use of a white cane. From 2015 to the present, I have continued to give back to the disability community by working as an Independent Living Specialist and currently as an Operations Manager. Without the CIL services, I would have never been at the quality of life I now live and, more importantly, giving back to the disability community.

Ways and Means Committee, I ask you except my testimony as evidence that CIL Services genuinely make a difference to so many in the disabled community. I consider myself living proof; that CIL services are essential and make a difference.

I urge the committee to fund the 2.6 million dollar request for CIL Pay Equity.