

Dear Co-Chairs Campos and Valderama and Committee Members,

My name is Charlotte Curtis. And ever since was connected with my local Center for Independent Living it has gave me a place to go instead of staying home all day doing nothing. Going to the mental health drop-in center has gotten me to socialize with people, especially after my mom passed away three years ago. When they were closed due to Covid-19, my depression was bad. When LILA opened back up it got me out of the house again, and it helped with my depression. Being around the people helped cheered me up. Doing the support groups and activities is fun and it gets me to move my body like doing chair yoga, and WII fitness. Also, the meditation skills that I am learning from LILA helps calm my mind since I over think stuff. I love meeting new people who I interact with at LILA. I have met a lot of nice and kind people; the staff are amazing and very helpful when you need the help or if you need someone to talk to about what's going on in life. I don't know where I will be today without LILA. It has helped so much with my life. If it was not for my late mother who talked me in to joining I would have never found my place here at LILA or I the community in general. I very well may have still been going down the very dark road that I was on. Even when they were closed I had LILA staff talk to after my mom passed away in early 2020. Even when I got Covid-19 in late 2020, one staff member safely gave me stuff to do after I got out of the hospital and LILA staff even helped me get food through Grub hub. If it was not for the staff at LILA I would have gone a bad way – something I do not even consider anymore. I am so thankful for the Independent Living Movement and for LILA in particular. Please grant the funding request that the CIL's are asking for – they provide so much benefit to the disabled community and I do not know what I would do if they did not exist (or if the staff moves on).

Thank you for allowing me to submit this testimony on behalf of all CILs in Oregon.

-Charlotte Curtis

-Eugene, OR