



Who we are:

- The Maryland Independent Living Network is a partnership of the seven Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council (MSILC.) CILs are federally established nonprofit disability resource and advocacy organizations located throughout Maryland operated by and for people with disabilities. The MSILC, a governor-appointed advisory council, works with CILs to promote independent living across the State of Maryland.
- The Independent Living Movement believes that people with disabilities are the best experts on their needs. We value equal opportunity, self-determination, and self-respect. We reject the idea that disability is a barrier to independent living but rather the environment and attitudes of our society are the barriers.

What CILs do:

- Centers offer services and supports for younger people with disabilities and seniors to live independently, at home!
- We provide information and referral.
- We teach independent living skills.
- We offer solutions for accessibility with home modifications or equipment so people can stay in their own homes and live and work freely in their communities.
- Staff provide peers for youth and adults which allows consumers to see role models of what is possible.
- We teach people how to advocate for the things they need and how to change the service delivery system
- We support people who want to move out of nursing homes by helping them understand, apply for, and navigate the community services they need.

As people with disabilities, the following is a list of our priorities as determined by a combination of day-to-day work experience with consumers, statewide studies, and needs assessments conducted by our Independent Living Network. The IL network works to ensure the civil rights of people with disabilities in Maryland and should legislation arise that is not specifically mentioned below, it can always be made a priority.

Housing

1. Increase number of accessible, affordable, integrated, and safe units
2. Increase number of vouchers for said units at 10% or less of Area Median Income (AMI)
3. Increase and improve renters' rights/Fair Housing enforcement
4. Increase funding to CILs for housing case management
5. Increase funds for home and rental accessibility modifications

Transportation/Transit

1. Increase compliance with accessibility guidelines for train and bus stops, including floating bus stops
2. Increase public transit routes and times, particularly in rural areas
3. Increase public transit reliability
4. Provide for public transit options that cross jurisdictions
5. Increase accessibility of sidewalks, curb cuts, and their maintenance on all state and county roads
6. Increase the number of accessible taxi cabs per county to 10%

Healthcare/Long-Term Supports and Services

1. Limit medical institutions' ability to aggressively seek payment
2. Increase the ability for people to get medications prescribed by a doctor including affordable access to necessary medications.
3. Increase access to Durable Medical Equipment for those on private insurance
4. Require private insurers to match Medicaid Home and Community Based Services options
5. Oppose the use of physician assisted suicide or so-called "death with dignity" measures
6. Require interagency cooperation to enforce "most integrated settings" rule to ensure access to housing, transit, healthcare, personal assistance services, etc.

Ending the Institutional Bias

1. Increase Home and Community Based Services, regardless of payer
2. Designate facility residence as "homeless" allowing for emergency shelter placement
3. Comply with Olmstead requirements and allow for 24/7 support in the home
4. Oppose the development and continuation of congregate or segregated settings

Employment

1. Create more flexibility within the Employed Individuals with Disabilities Medicaid Buy-In Program
2. Increase direct care professionals pay in Community Options Waiver, Community First Choice, and Community Personal Assistance Services
3. Increase state employment of people with disabilities to 20% across all levels of government

Education

1. Increase Individuals with Disabilities' Education Act (IDEA) funding and compliance of IDEA and Plans from Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
2. Mandate intended resource sharing between public and private schools regarding Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

Emergency Preparedness/Disaster Response/COVID-19 Response

1. Ensure Medicaid Waivers are compliant with disability civil rights laws including Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
2. Create fast-track system for seamless transition from facility to community or diversion from facility during crisis

Voting

1. Reinstate automatic absentee ballot list without having to re-register each time
2. Commit to ensuring voting is accessible to all people with disabilities.

Digital Equity

1. Increase funding for technology for students to participate in virtual learning.
2. Fund training in use of online devices and programs including digital literacy and safety
3. Support low-income families to access low cost, high-speed internet
4. Expanding high speed internet access statewide
5. Increase access to private, independent communications in nursing facilities through the use of both telephone and internet.

For more information, please contact:

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