



Statewide Independent Living Council – Public Policy & Legislation Committee

Wednesday, August 9, 2017 (2:00 PM– 3:30 PM)

Meeting Held Via Teleconference, To Connect Via Teleconference:

Dial 1-866- 848-2216, pin code 8099566334#

Committee Members Present:

Wendy Swager, Paula Seanez, Joy Johnson LaBarge, Sonya Perduta

Staff Present:

Larry Wanger, Melissa Ann Santora

Welcome and Introductions:

Wendy Swager welcomed committee members, and called the meeting to order. Introductions were completed.

HR 620

Wendy indicated that there has been a strong push by California regarding HR 620. Larry noted that this continues to gain sponsors, both Democratic and Republican. Larry stated that there are many sponsors, and it is gaining momentum. Larry mentioned that Kyrsten Sinema has signed on.

Wendy indicated that this committee can call Representatives, voice opposition to this legislation which would deny people from making ADA complaints. She noted that this puts the responsibility on the wrong people.

Healthcare:

Larry stated that this is not going anywhere fast, and referenced the McCain vote. Larry indicated that there was some discussion and an ADAPT Action while he was at the National Council on Independent Living Conference (NCIL) Conference. Although discussion continues around Medicaid, there has not been much movement.

Independent Living Program:

Larry reported that the FY18 Presidential Budget suggests combining Statewide Independent Living Councils, Developmental Disability Councils, and Spinal and Head Injury Councils, and eliminating Part B funding. The Administration for Community Living (ACL) convened a call in July, and Larry served as the SILC representative. The process ACL used for gaining insight and information from stakeholders was concerning, and people voiced those concerns. ACL then created a feedback mechanism for CILS and SILCs. Larry is preparing written comments currently. Larry indicated that he has heard that we should expect legislation to be introduced for FY19. Larry reminded committee members that both the Rehabilitation and Developmental Disability Acts would have to be amended, in addition to any legislation that is passed. Larry reported that it is believed that this may be packaged in to a larger government reform bill, and that WIOA is not part of the conversation. Larry indicated that it is believed that the government doesn't understand that the majority of Part B funds go to CILs, not SILCs. Many CILs only receive Part B funds.



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Wendy inquired about what the committee can do. Larry indicated that he will share his comments with committee members and provide them with the ACL feedback process. Larry stated that the Senate criticized the budget as detrimental to people who have disabilities and the House is poised to do the same.

Larry announced that, if elimination of funding for federally mandated councils were to occur, the Administration would have to re-write pieces of legislation (such as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973). Larry reported that Congress established the Independent Living Program within the Department of Education, and continues to provide funding for Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs), which are congressionally mandated organizations that plan or deliver services and support people with disabilities to live independently. In order for Statewide Independent Living Councils to be completely eliminated, the Rehabilitation Act would have to be re-written, and Larry stated that finalization of this process would likely require significant time.

Information:

Larry reported that the Administration is considering revoking the decision to allow families of individuals receiving nursing home care to seek legal recourse if the person deceases in care. Larry indicated that the comment period has closed, but wanted the committee to be aware.

Health Care Survey:

Larry indicated that a 5 question surveys was sent to CILs. There were no responses. Larry followed up with asking if the CILs would put information on their websites and provide 1:1 assistance with filing complaints. The CIL in Yuma responded affirmatively. No other responses were received.

Wendy asked if CILs were accountable to respond. Larry indicated that they are not obligated to respond, but he would expect them to do so, out of common courtesy. Wendy asked how the committee can assist. Larry suggested considering sending a letter to CILs.

Sonya inquired whether or not SILC has administrative authority in this regard. Larry indicated that SILCs do not have statutory authority, and that Federal law does not require that CILs respond.

Larry suggested that the committee could look outside of CILs to partner. Wendy will ask Linkages, UHC, and Aetna to post information. Larry suggested that perhaps the Developmental Disabilities Planning Council would post information., Sonya remarked that she thinks anywhere is better than nowhere. Larry will try again with CILs.



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The committee would like to create a document that describes when and how to file a complaint.

Action steps:

- Use statistical information from survey
- Synthesize information
- Send information to Larry (if you have any)
- Sonya will assist with synthesizing information

Wendy wondered if the next step would be to contact AHCCCS. Larry reported that previous discussions have happened without yielding results. Wendy suggested a 2-tier approach, on education of legislators and seeking support for compliance. Wendy will contact Dara Johnson to discuss this further.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by Wendy Swager.