

Senate Bill 608  
Senate Finance Committee  
Testimony Presented by Melissa Blubaugh  
March 10, 2023.

Hello, my name is Melissa Blubaugh. I am the Vice-chair of the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council or Maryland SILC.

The Maryland SILC is an autonomous state entity working with the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) to increase and maximize the impact of independent living services in Maryland.

The SILC is composed of Governor-appointed volunteers, a majority of whom are individuals with disabilities. Council members also represent diverse cultural backgrounds and geographic locations.

One very important distinction is that the SILC is the only cross-disability advisory organization in Maryland.

The State qualifies for federal independent living (IL) funds because of the existence of the SILC and the SILC's federal mandate to develop a three-year State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL).

The SPIL is developed by the SILC and the CIL Directors to identify and outline IL priorities and needs for the state's citizens with disabilities, as well as designate where the funds are disbursed across the state.

These IL funds annually total over \$2 million dollars to benefit Maryland residents with disabilities like me.

Thank you for this opportunity.

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