



House Bill 53

House Health Government Operations

February 14, 2023

Support

Michael Bullis, Treasurer, Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council

Chair and members of the Committee:

This Bill creates the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council in statute which allows it to receive and expend federal funds in accordance with federal law and create plans and recommendations for the delivery of Independent Living Services in Maryland.

The unique thing about independent living Centers is that they are operated by people with disabilities. It is likely that receiving our services may be the only time that a person with a disability will receive services and supports from someone with a significant disability.

The seven Centers for Independent Living (CIL) were established by federal law and work to ensure the civil rights and quality services of people with disabilities in Maryland. Centers for Independent Living are nonprofit disability resource and advocacy organizations located throughout Maryland operated by and for people with disabilities. CIL staff and Boards are at least 51% people with disabilities. We are part of a nationwide network which provides Information and Referral, Advocacy, Peer Support, Independent Living Skills training, and Transition Services.

I urge your support.