

NCIL, APRIL, and NASILC Full Joint Statement on Leaked  
Memo on Proposed Budget

The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL), and the National Association of Statewide Independent Living Councils (NASILC) have reviewed the recently leaked internal budget document from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). That document proposed cuts to specific programs, amounting to a cut of about 30% of the Health and Human Services (HHS) discretionary budget. While this document does not represent a formal or final proposal from the White House, it does give us a peek into what OMB and HHS may propose to Congress.

Specifically, the document proposes eliminating / reducing funds (to zero) for many ACL programs, including but not limited to:

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs

State Councils on Developmental Disabilities

Developmental Disabilities Protection & Advocacy: the protection and advocacy grants focused on people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and people with mental illness

University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

Limb Loss Resource Center

Paralysis Resource Center

National Institute on Disability

National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research

Voting Access for People with Disabilities

Aging & Disability Resource Centers

Some substance abuse and mental health programs

This list is only a brief list of cuts and eliminations throughout the budget.

The leaked budget has a total line item of \$453.183 million for the Independent Living Program. Funding is level-funded for Centers for Independent Living (Part C) and an increase of \$325 million for Part B. Page 48 of the document states that this money will go to state grants and the grants are intended to provide flexibility to states to use the funding to provide services and supports provided by the disability programs the budget eliminates. It is also alarming that the document asks HHS to work with OMB to determine whether additional flexibility or authorities are needed to carry out the intended budget policy.

Several of the eliminated programs have been in statute for decades. To our knowledge, there is not a mechanism that exists for HHS to legally eliminate the programs in federal statute without an act of Congress.

While this document is unofficial, it is an early step in the budget process that will need to make its way through both the House and the Senate. It is important to recognize that we must fight this proposal by working in coalition with our partners in the disability and aging communities and beyond.

The federal appropriations process involves several steps, including hearings, markups, and negotiations in both chambers of Congress. We recognize that the President's proposal is only the beginning of that process.

The Independent Living community recognizes the important role that all these disability programs play. We are committed to working with our partners to ensure that the final budget is reflective of our community's needs, especially the programs our community advocated for in federal statute.

It is vitally important that the disability community advocates with their members of Congress to protect program appropriations.

Five ways to take action:

1. Respond to action alerts from NCIL, NASILC, and APRIL to protect Independent Living and other disability programs' appropriations, such as State Developmental Disabilities Councils and Protection & Advocacy programs.
2. Make phone calls to your Senators and Representatives regularly to protect programs important to you. Don't skip this crucial step!

3. Collect impact stories from your Centers for Independent Living and other disability programs in your state and share those stories with NCIL, APRIL and NASILC using the emails below. Additionally, APRIL has two impact surveys out right now. One for individual stories and one for CIL stories. You can access those surveys on APRIL's website (<https://bit.ly/4lZjVxt>).

4. If your CIL or SILC has unrestricted funding to engage in lobbying activities, set up an in-district meeting in the next two weeks on program appropriations or ask your board members to meet with their Representatives. If you need talking points, please see NCIL's website (<https://bit.ly/42XEhzi>) or contact Jessica at [jessica@ncil.org](mailto:jessica@ncil.org).

5. Meet with local media to share the impact that cuts or reductions in disability programs / services will have on your family and community.

It is vital that the disability community remains unified in holding our elected officials accountable for protecting the programs we've fought tirelessly to secure in federal law.

Questions about this statement can be addressed to:

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