What is a SILC and why should I care?

Slide 1 – What is a SILC and why should I Care?
- Dr. FranSha’ Anderson – Arkansas State Independent Living Council
- Tyler Wilcox – Independent Living Council of Wisconsin

Slide 2 – It has nothing to do with this...
- Image: Three Bombyx mori surrounded by silkworm cocoons.
- Image: Bolts of colorful silk fabric bundles stacked on a counter.

Slide 3 – SILC stands for
- Statewide
- Independent
- Living
- Council

Slide 4 – The Council Part is Really Important
- Council members are appointed by the Governor
- SILCs work, partner, and collaborate with other boards, councils, and commissions
- SILCs are frequently in contact with both state and federal government entities

Slide 5 – Another thing to remember about SILCs
- Even though it isn’t part of the acronym, SILCs are their own thing. Autonomy is really important for a SILC to be effective.
SILCs work with the government but are not part of the government
SILCs work with CILs but are not an extension of the CILs

**Slide 6 – There are 56 SILCs**
- All 50 states, 5 permanently inhabited territories of the United States, and the District of Columbia have a SILC
- Each SILC functions a little differently, but they all have the same goal
- SILCs are authorized by the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, as Amended in 2015 by Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA, pronounced “we-owe-a”)

**Slide 7 – Who would ever want to be on the SILC?**

**Slide 8 – Consumer direction is the most important thing**
- IL is all about consumer control
  - Remember: Nothing about us without us!
- A majority (at least 51%) of the SILC members must be persons with disabilities

**Slide 9 – SILCs don’t want too much interference**
- A majority (at least 51%) of the council must be persons who do not work for a state agency
- A majority (at least 51%) of the council cannot work at a CIL
- The Governor appoints new SILC members, but they have to get recommendations from their SILC
  - Mileage may vary depending on state
Slide 10 – Statewideness is also a thing

- Seriously, that is the word we use.
- We try to get people from all over the state to join up, including:
  - Folks from Tinytown, pop. 1
  - Folks from Giantberg, pop. 1,000,000
  - Folks from Middleplace, pop. 50,000
  - Folks from the middle of nowhere
  - Folks from the middle of everything

Slide 11 – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion are a big deal, too

- We need as many voices to be heard as possible; that means we want to hear from literally everyone...(ellipsis)
  - This includes different socioeconomic backgrounds, education levels, employment, racial identity, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, gender identity, education level, age...(ellipsis)
  - We also want as many disabilities represented as possible
- ...(ellipsis) because everyone needs something a little different, and we want to make sure we make our states accessible for as many people as possible.

Slide 12 – ...(ellipsis) and we don’t want things to get stale

- SILC members can only serve 2 consecutive 3-year terms, and then they have to take a break from the council
Slide 13 – On top of all that, all of this is required by the Rehab act...(ellipsis)

...(ellipsis) and there might be state laws that we have to think about too

Slide 14 – Keeping track of all this is a lot of work

• Most SILCs have at least one staff person. Making sure the council has the right people, keeping them well-trained, and active is a big part of what they do

Slide 15 – All that being said...(ellipsis)

...(ellipsis) we love it when CIL leadership, staff, and board members are a part of our team. It makes the SILC stronger and lets us know what’s going on at the centers.

Slide 16 – So what does a SILC actually do?

Slide 17 – SILCs have two primary responsibilities

• Writing the SPIL with the help of the CILs
• Making sure that everything in the SPIL gets accomplished, or making changes when they can’t be

Slide 18 – They also have to:

• Have regular meetings
  o Meetings have to be open to the public
  o People have to know about meetings before they happen
• Submit reports
  o and keep records that verify the information in the reports
• Work with other groups that provide IL services or similar services

**Slide 19 – SILCs can choose to do other stuff too**

• “Work with CILs to coordinate with public and private entities to improve services”
  o Read: work with others to make sure persons with disabilities get what they need
• “Conduct resource development activities”
  o Read: get more money for the SILC
• Slide 20 – Anything else, as long as it helps improve Independent Living in their state

**Slide 20 – SILCs are not allowed to do some things**

• They can’t help consumers directly
• They can’t tell persons that work with consumers how to do their job

**Slide 21 – What is this SPIL thing about anyways?**

**Slide 22 – It has nothing to do with this:**

  Image: Milk spilled on a grocery store floor.
  Image: A bottle of water spilled on the ground.

**Slide 23 – The SPIL is kind of like a road map...(ellipsis)**

  Image: A map of the world from the 17th century with a wavy red line connecting A and B.

**Slide 24 - The SPIL helps guide IL in your state by:**

• Figuring out CIL service areas
- Making sure as many persons as possible have access to a CIL
- Deciding how to spend Part B funding
- Setting goals to help persons with disabilities be independent as possible

**Slide 25 – The SPIL is a 3-year Plan**
- We are currently in the 2020-2023 SPIL Cycle
  - There was an extension due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- SILCs are busy working on the 2024-2026 SPIL as we speak
  - The new SPIL is due to ACL June 30, 2023

**Slide 26 – There are 9 Major Sections**
- Section 1: Goals, Objectives, and Activities
- Section 2: Scope, Extent, and Arrangement of Services
- Section 3: Network of Centers
- Section 4: Designated State Entity (DSE) Responsibilities
- Section 5: SILC
- Section 6: Legal Basis and Certifications
- Section 7: DSE Assurances
- Section 8: SILC Assurances and Indicators of Minimum Compliance
- Section 9: Signatures

**Slide 27 – Why is there a whole section for signatures?**
- There are a bunch of people that have to approve the SPIL before ACL will even look at it:
  - The SILC Chair, after the council has given them approval to do so
At least 51% of the state’s CIL directors; depending on the state, this could be a lot of people

The DSE

**Slide 28 – Okay, but who is in charge then?**
- The short answer is: nobody
  - IL should work as a network, not a hierarchy
  - CILs do the work of making sure people get what they need
  - The DSE makes sure the money goes where it needs to go
  - The SILC designs the SPIL and makes sure the state meets its goals

**Slide 29 – Needless to say, it’s a huge task.**
*Now it’s time for the soap boxy bit...*(ellipsis)

**Slide 30 – So...*(ellipsis)* why should I care?**
- The SPIL guides how we make IL stronger in its state
- Without everyone’s perspective, we can never hope to see from everyone’s point of view
- Even if you don’t notice it, everything we do is guided by or influences our SPIILs and our SILCs

**Slide 31 – Most importantly, the more people we get involved, the stronger we can be.**
Image: 300 Amish men moving a huge barn without any machinery.

**Slide 32 – Okay, so what can I do?**
- Read the SPIL
o At the very least, read the goals and objectives
o Ask questions if you don’t understand

- Provide public comment and feedback
  o The more people we hear from, the more we can make sure we are doing the right things for our state

- Get to know your SILC members and staff
  o We are nice people; we don’t bite.

- Help with SPIL development; see if there is a place for you on the SPIL team

- Join your SILC or work with one of the SILC committees

**Slide 33 -Not tired of us yet? Give us a holler!**

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