



*The United Voice
of Independent Living
in Rural America*

September 2026

A message from the Executive Director's Desk

I hope this letter finds you well as we move into the Fall Season and (fingers, toes and arms crossed) some cooler weather!! This summer has been brutally hot for most of us and I, for one, could not be more OVER IT!

With the 2026 APRIL Conference FAST approaching in just under 5 weeks, I am reaching out to you with a **huge favor to ask**. I am asking you to please complete this very brief questionnaire, mainly about the upcoming APRIL Conference in Niagara Falls, NY.

LINK: <https://form.jotform.com/262546376259064>

Because our registration numbers are quite low as of right now, we are considering contingency plans for a significant shortfall with the hotel room block and our bottom line in general. APRIL is aware that a great deal of apprehension and uncertainty regarding the proposed OMB rule change exists in the IL Network and that it may be causing hesitation in attending the APRIL Conference. While we did receive verbal guidance from ACL during an IL Stakeholder meeting assuring everyone that the proposed OMB rule is not yet in effect and will not impact travel to the APRIL Conference, we understand that an overabundance of caution still exists. We have asked ACL to release further guidance that can be shared with our APRIL Members and the broader IL Network. The following language has been provided to us by ACL. This will also be sent out to the IL Network in ACL's Newsletter very soon.

Clarification Regarding Conference Attendance and Federal Award Funds

ACL has received questions about whether recent proposed changes to OMB's Uniform Guidance currently restrict the use of Federal award funds for conference attendance. On May 29, 2026, OMB proposed revisions to 2 CFR part 200 that would require Federal agency approval for certain conference attendance costs charged to an award. **That proposed requirement is not currently in effect.** Congress has prohibited OMB from issuing or finalizing the proposed rule regulation, or a substantially similar regulation, through December 11, 2026.

Recipients should continue to follow the currently applicable Uniform Guidance, their award terms and conditions, and applicable program requirements. Under 2 CFR § 200.432, conference costs, including attendance fees, may be allowable when the conference is necessary and reasonable for successful performance of the Federal award.

Accordingly, there is **not currently a government-wide requirement that recipients obtain Federal agency approval simply to attend a conference using Federal award funds.** Recipients remain responsible for ensuring that conference and related travel costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable, necessary for the performance of the Federal award, and properly documented under their awards. Recipients should also review their award terms and conditions and any applicable program-specific or appropriations requirements that may impose additional restrictions. ACL will provide additional information if applicable Federal requirements change.



Back to that favor.... if you would please complete the questionnaire as soon as you have a moment, it won't take long at all, the information will help us plan for the possibility of a shortfall with the hotel in Niagara Falls and help us put a contingency plan together. The deadline to reserve your hotel room is **September 21, 2026**. The hotel has agreed to extend the cut off for our block but only until the hotel is sold out – meaning the rooms are now considered part of open inventory so please make your reservations as soon as possible.

APRIL is always willing to work with you regarding registrations. You can register for the APRIL Conference and click 'Pay Offline' if you need more time to send payment. This ensures your regular registration rate is secured and payment can be sent later or even brought with you to the

Conference. We understand that budgets are strained and unforeseen circumstances happen so we try to be as flexible and supportive as possible.

I want you all to know that my proverbial door is always open. If you have questions or concerns about the Conference, APRIL in general, or anything, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. APRIL exists to serve our members and the broader IL Network and we are always striving to do that in more meaningful, impactful ways.

We have a really dynamic variety of workshops lined up for this year's conference and we're really excited about seeing you there! If you haven't had a chance to check out the Agenda, please visit the 2026 APRIL Conference website. [2026 Conference Home Page](#)

We hope to see everyone this October at the annual APRIL conference in Niagara Falls, New York.

Looking forward to building a better, more loving future with all of you!

Elissa Ellis

Elissa Ellis, Executive Director