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August 14, 2020

Mr. Lance Robertson
Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging
Administration for Community Living
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
330 C Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201
Administrator-ASA@acl.hhs.gov

Re: Application for Independent Living Training and Technical Assistance Grant - HHS-2020-ACL-AOD-ILTA-0423; Statewide Independent Living Council Training and Technical Assistance Center Grant - HHS-2020-ACL-AOD-ISTA-0424

Dear Administrator and Assistant Secretary Robertson:

I write today regarding the two grant applications submitted by the Institute for Rehabilitation and Research Memorial Herman (TIRR Memorial Hermann) to support the Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU) program's IL-NET Training and Technical Assistance Center for Independent Living (IL-NET). ILRU's IL-NET is the nationally leading technical assistance and training center in the independent living field. TIRR-Memorial Hermann is perennially ranked among the top five rehabilitation hospitals, according to US News and World Report, and was ranked the third best hospital for rehabilitation in the recent 2020 rankings.

IL-NET supports over 400 centers for independent living (CILs) and 56 statewide and territorial statewide independent living councils (SILCs) with training and technical assistance to promote their excellence in services for the disability community. In addition, IL-NET has met the challenge of assisting CILs and SILCs in the current COVID-19 pandemic and in many previous emergencies and has become directly involved in recovery activities in disasters. IL-NET has supported centers to pivot to entirely new ways of working with constituents, and more and more CILs have been able to successfully transition to remotely provided services in a time when in person services are an exposure risk for constituents and staffs alike.

With the help of these grants, IL-NET will be able to continue to operate a comprehensive national program of virtual, conference, and on-site training for CILs and SILCs to facilitate learning of executives, boards of directors and staffs and foster implementation of best and promising practices in service programs, operations, financial management, compliance and adherence to regulations. Additionally, it will provide demand-responsive technical assistance and real-time web-based information pertinent to management, programs, services and operations of CILs and SILCs.

CILs and SILCs are crucial to community living for over 230,000 individuals with disabilities. ILRU's operation of the grant funded IL-NET training and technical assistance programs are crucial to CILs, SILCs and people with disabilities across our nation. I urge the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to Services and give all due consideration and a timely response to ILRU at TIRR Memorial Hermann's application.

Sincerely,



Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress