



27th Annual SILC Congress
Pre-Conference March 10, 2025
March 11 - 13, 2025

Collaborate

Organize

Network

Navigate

Empower

Create

Transform

This book belongs to: _____

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Save the Date

2026 SILC Congress

March 16th-19th, 2026

Rosen Centre Hotel

9840 International Drive, Orlando, FL



Mission: To provide resources to SILCs across the nation and promote collaboration with their partners to advance IL values and philosophy.

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Welcome to the 27th Annual SILC Congress:

The National Association of Statewide Independent Living Councils Board of Directors, SILC Congress Planning Committee, the Florida Statewide Independent Living Council and Rosen Centre welcome you to the 2025 SILC Congress. This year marks our 27th conference. We thank you for your attendance and continued support.

In 2024 and so far in 2025, though only a few months in, have shown us that we can rally in a time of need, and we are stronger together.

As we think about this year's theme: "*CONNECT – Collaborate, Organize, Network, Navigate, Empower, Create, and Transform*" – I look to this group to come together and offer the peer support to strengthen SILCs autonomy and value while supporting one another. This is how we fulfill our purpose and further our opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

As your current chair and an active member of national independent living organizations, I feel it is essential that we work in partnership with CILs, DSEs and other organizations both nationally and in our respective states to protect and secure funding, programs, and initiatives that are essential to people who have disabilities. The future of IL is about coming together, proactively planning for the future, and making room for the next generation while welcoming that generation to the table.

The Conference Planning Committee has worked hard to ensure that this conference will provide you with presentations, workshops, opportunities for dialogue and networking that will support your work. I thank you for the investment you have made in this conference and trust that you will benefit from what you have learned.

SILC Congress could not happen without the help of many dedicated people who volunteer a significant amount of time to plan and organize this conference. I want to take a moment to thank the committee members and Regional Representatives for all their hard work to make SILC Congress a success, Thank YOU.

I would also like to thank the 2025 SILC Congress sponsors:

Accessibility Sponsor - Q90

Merch Sponsor – United Access

Program Ad – Susan Larsen Marketing

With warmest regards,
Brooke Wilson, Chair - NASILC

Conference Schedule of Events:

Pre-Conference - Monday, March 10, 2025

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm - Check-in and Registration

1:00 pm - 4:30 pm – SILC 101 with Paula McElwee

Day 1 – Tuesday, March 11, 2025

8:00 am – 9:00 am: Check-in & Registration

9:00 am – 10:30 am: General Session - Welcome – ACL Updates and Ask ACL

10:30 am – 10:45 am: Break

10:45 am – 12:00 pm: General Session - Peer Panel – How We Run Our SILCs

12:00 pm– 1:00 pm: Lunch (Provided)

1:15 pm -2:30 pm: Breakout Sessions

- A. Region Breakouts 1-5
- B. Region Breakouts 6-10

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm: Break

2:45 pm– 4:00 pm: Breakout Sessions

- A. Are You Ready for it? Engaging the Next generation in Your SILC
 - B. Advocacy & Lobbying for SILCs – Understanding Legal Boundaries & Strategic Approaches
-

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Day 2 - Wednesday, March 12, 2025

8:30 am – 9:00 am: Check-in & Registration

9:00 am – 10:30 am: General Session - Resource Directory - State Sharing

10:30 am – 10:45 am: Break

10:45 am – 12:00 pm: General Session - Annual Meeting

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm: Lunch (Provided)

1:15 pm – 2:30 pm: Breakout Sessions

- A. 1915...what? Understanding HCBS – Free Our People!
- B. Recognizing, Addressing & Counteracting Unconscious Bias: Lessons Learned

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm: Break

2:45 pm – 4:00 pm Breakout Sessions

- A. Leveraging AI for SILCs: Enhancing Advocacy, Accessibility and Service Delivery
 - B. Your SILC is a Nonprofit: Now What?!
-

Day 3 - Thursday, March 13, 2025

8:30 am – 9:00 am: Check-in & Registration

9:00 am – 10:15 am: General Session - OILP PPRs, Monitoring & SILCs – What SILCs Need to Know?

10:15 am – 10:30 am: Break

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10:30 am – 12:00 pm: General Session - National Panel on Advocacy & Policy Updates

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm: Lunch (Provided)

1:15 pm – 2:30 pm: Breakout Sessions

A. Gratitude in Action: Empowering SILC Members Through Appreciation & Engagement

B. Serving on a Board

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm: Break

2:45 pm – 4:00 pm: Breakout Sessions

A. SILCs Role in Disaster Work

B. Connecting Global Concepts & Statewide Strategy

NOTES:

General Session Information:

SILC 101

The basics of what a SILC is, what the law says, how it operates in the IL network and what the regulations and indicators require.

ACL Updates and Ask ACL

2025 SILC Congress attendees have an opportunity to submit questions for a Q&A session with OILP/ACL staff. Questions were requested prior to SILC Congress to provide ACL with time to review and gather information that will be shared during this informative session.

How We Run Our SILCs – Peer Panel

Join a dynamic panel of peers for a thought-provoking discussion on the best practices for running a successful Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). This session will feature experienced panelists, who will share their insights, real-world experiences, and practical strategies for effectively running your Quarterly SILC meeting, monitoring your SPIL, working with your DSE, and keeping your SILC members engaged between quarterly meetings.

Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions, share their own experiences, and engage with the panel to gain valuable insights into enhancing the impact of their councils. Don't miss this chance to hear from seasoned professionals and leave with practical takeaways to improve your council's work!

National Panel on Advocacy & Policy Updates

National Organizations - NCIL, APRIL, NASILC come together to discuss advocacy and policy updates from the national lens, fostering partnership and opportunities collaboration.

Resource Directory and State Sharing

These sessions are designed to provide SILCs with an opportunity to share what is happening in their state. Attendees have found this session to be a great place to share ideas and to learn from one another.

Annual Meeting

Agenda listed on page 20

Regional Breakouts

For Regional breakouts meet with your region to discuss in more detail ideas and problem solve issues. Region information is on page 30

OILP PPRs, Monitoring & SILCs – What SILCs Need to Know?

Breakout Session Information:

Connecting Global Concepts and Statewide Strategy

Join Arizona SILC for a glimpse into the groundwork, current efforts, and future trajectory related to the Environmental Justice initiatives within their current SPIL and statewide strategy.

Your SILC is a Nonprofit: Now What?!

To be or not to be a Nonprofit SILC, that is a longtime question in SILC circles. If you're curious about, are considering, or are navigating nonprofit status, come connect with Arizona SILC, who has been a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Corporation for nearly 25 years.

1915... what? Understanding HCBS – Free Our People!

Access, Choice and Community Living are the foundation of Independent Living yet many of us do not understand the details of Home and Community Based Service or 1915 waivers. It's time to stop being intimidated and start learning what's in these waivers or risk a significant loss to those who depend on them to live in their community.

Gratitude in Action: Empowering SILC Members Through Appreciation and Engagement

This interactive session will explore the transformative power of gratitude in enhancing the work and collaboration of State Independent Living Council (SILC) members. Volunteers appointed by the governor, who dedicate their time and energy to advancing independent living, play a vital role in shaping their communities. This presentation will highlight the importance of expressing gratitude and empathy as essential tools for strengthening relationships, boosting engagement, and fostering a positive, supportive environment within the council.

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Attendees will learn practical strategies for expressing appreciation, from personalized messages to public recognition, and discover how these actions can lead to improved morale, stronger teamwork, and greater commitment to the mission. Through group discussions and reflection exercises, SILC members will share ideas and best practices for engaging their peers and building a culture of gratitude.

Join us for a session focused on strengthening connections, boosting motivation, and reinforcing the invaluable work of SILC members through the simple yet powerful act of gratitude.

Leveraging AI for State Independent Living Councils (SILCs): Enhancing Advocacy, Accessibility, and Service Delivery

This workshop explores the potential applications of artificial intelligence (AI) for State Independent Living Councils (SILCs), with a focus on enhancing advocacy efforts, improving service delivery, increasing accessibility, and optimizing operations. Participants will learn how AI can be integrated into various aspects of SILC work to empower individuals with disabilities, improve organizational efficiency, and support disability rights advocacy.

Advocacy and Lobbying for SILCs – Understanding Legal Boundaries and Strategic Approaches

This workshop provides an introduction to the concepts of advocacy and lobbying, specifically in the context of Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs). Participants will gain a clear understanding of the roles SILCs can play in influencing policy and legislation, the legal frameworks surrounding these activities, and strategies to navigate legal limitations while maximizing advocacy efforts for individuals with disabilities.

Recognizing, Addressing and Counteracting Unconscious Bias: Lessons Learned

Join the Colorado Office of Independent Living Services and peers for an engaging training session that will explore how unconscious/implicit bias impacts the delivery of employment services to individuals with disabilities in the context of the Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability (SEEKS) research study funded by NIDDLRR. This session is designed to equip participants with the knowledge and tools needed to identify, understand, and combat unconscious bias.

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Whether you are a manager, an IL specialist and peer or support staff, this training will provide valuable insights and actionable strategies to enhance the delivery of services. By participating in this training, you will not only improve your own awareness and understanding of unconscious bias, but also contribute to creating a more inclusive and equitable environment for all.

Are You Ready for it? Engaging the Next Generation in your SILC

Youth and young adults with disabilities are the future leaders of the Independent Living (IL) movement. Is your SILC ready for it? Join the Florida SILC as they share effective strategies for involving youth in SILCs.

This session will explore:

- Facilitating leadership and IL philosophy training for youth
- Supporting your state’s Centers for Independent Living (CILs) in engaging youth
- Understanding how youth can contribute to developing your state plan
- Involving youth on your SILC board or committees

SILC's Role in CIL Disaster Work

The SILC's role is critical to the CIL's success during a disaster. Understanding the importance of the SPIL language and addressing state systemic barriers.

Serving on a Board

The SILC is a council but it is also a board of directors whether or not you are a private, not-for-profit corporation. What is the role of the board in managing staff, budget, meetings and more?

NOTES:

2025 Speaker Biographies:

Allison Viramontes-Nhan joined the California State Independent Living Council (CA SILC) in May 2023, bringing extensive legislative experience to her role. Prior to CA SILC, she served as a Legislative Coordinator in the Office of Legislative and Governmental Affairs at the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). She also worked as a Legislative and Regulatory Analyst at the Dental Board of California. Through these roles, Allison has developed a strong foundation in policy and advocacy, along with a deep passion for helping others. Allison earned her undergraduate degree in Cognitive Sciences from the University of California, Irvine, and her J.D. from Thomas Jefferson School of Law. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading, staying active, and traveling.

Beth Meyer has served as Executive Director of the Florida Independent Living Council (FILC) since 2018 and has over 25 years of experience in this field. Beth has worked as a Director for a Center for Independent Living (CIL), as Chief of the Disabled Services Division for the City of Jacksonville, and is a Certified ADA Coordinator. Beth was appointed in 2013 to the Florida Building Commission (FBC), where she worked on writing the 2014 Accessibility Building Codes. Currently, Beth sits on the Accessibility Advisory Council, reviewing ADA waiver requests to the FBC. As Division Chief, she was responsible for managing the Department of Justice (DOJ) Project Civic Access Settlement Agreement, addressing public access to one of the country's largest parks and recreation systems. Beth attended the University of North Florida as a Special Education Major, completed ADA Certification from the University of Missouri (2012), and received a Professional Associate from the United States Access Board National Associates of ADA Coordinators (2014).

Brooke Wilson is the Executive Director of the Oregon Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and has worked in the disability community for 18 years. She found IL in 2009, while in Utah and working for the Utah Development Disabilities Council, Grassroots Advocacy Partnership (GAP). She previously served as the Executive Director of the Utah SILC before relocating to Oregon in 2019. She is passionate about many issues including, youth involvement/engagement, mental health, and legislative advocacy. Brooke has served on many National boards and is currently the Chair of NASILC – National Association of Statewide Independent Living Councils. Brooke and her husband Corey have 4 children and 3 grandchildren, though Brooke loves children and is a “mom” to many.

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Carrie England has been with the California State Independent Living Council (CA SILC) since December 2019. She is actively involved with NASILC, serving as the Region 9 Representative, Regional Representative Chairperson, and SILC Congress Committee Chairperson. Before joining CA SILC, Carrie worked at the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) as Section Chief for the Independent Living, Assistive Technology, and Traumatic Brain Injury Section. She also held roles as a Staff Services Manager I and Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor at DOR.

Carrie's career in Independent Living includes serving as the Director of an Independent Living Center (ILC) in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and holding leadership positions with the Iowa State Independent Living Council (SILC), where she served as Vice President, Treasurer, and ILC Representative. She was also an active member of the Iowa Olmstead Committee for several years. Earlier in her career, Carrie was the Project Director for the Workability IV Program at Fresno State University, where she also worked as an adjunct faculty member in the Rehabilitation Counseling graduate program. She served as Chair of the Central Valley Mayors Committee, faculty advisor for a student-led organization, and an academic advisor.

Carrie holds two Master's degrees: one in Rehabilitation Counseling from California State University, Fresno, and another in Human Capital Management from Bellevue University in Nebraska.

Douglas (Doug) Alves, Independent Living Program Coordinator, at the Colorado Office of Independent Living Services and a Certified Benefits Planner (WIP-C). He works in the development, implementation and dissemination of the SEEKS (Securing Employment & Economic Keys to Stability) Research Study, a federal research grant that is testing a new intervention that looks at shifting an old paradigm that SSDI/SSI applicants should not work to a new paradigm where Social Security Disability Benefits and engagement in the workforce is not only possible but also encouraged as it can lead to improved gross monthly income, education and quality of life. In his position, Doug also oversees state contracts for the SEEKS study and the nine Centers for Independent Living in Colorado. Doug is also a certified Work Incentives Planner and has been instrumental in developing materials for State and Local Benefits Planning in Colorado. He serves on several committees to promote the use of Benefits Planning as a foundational tool to employment equity for people with disabilities. Doug is particularly interested in language and cultural equity and has developed several cultural sensitivity presentations for a variety of audiences including DVR staff, the Colorado SILC, and the SEEKS Advisory.

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Doug has a Linguistics and Language Arts background and worked as a Language teacher in Brazil for seven years, teaching middle and high schoolers in underserved and under-resourced communities.

Edward Mitchell was a victim of a hit-and-run bicycle accident in 2003 when he was hit by a truck, and thrown into a ditch, and found by his little brother. Edward has quadriplegia with an incomplete spinal cord injury at the C5 and C6 levels.

That hasn't slowed him down; he works as the Executive Director of the Statewide Independent Living Council of Tennessee while serving on numerous boards, such as United Spinal Association's Tech Access initiative.

Edward was inducted into the Lane College Hall of Distinction for the Young Alumni Achievement Award and was honored to accept the Jefferson - Multiplying Good Award from Leaders Credit Union for advocacy for individuals with disabilities locally and nationally.

Gloria Garton is the Executive Director of the North Carolina Statewide Independent Living Council (NC SILC). She joined NC SILC in 2022, bringing over 14 years of experience as the Executive Director of a Center for Independent Living in Wilmington, NC. Gloria is deeply committed to advocating for safe, integrated, affordable, and accessible housing for individuals with disabilities. Outside of her professional role, she enjoys spending time at the beach and exploring new coffee shops and bookstores.

Jennifer Martin joined ACL in April 2020 and is currently serving as the Program Analyst for Part C CILs and Part B ILS Programs in Regions 2 and 6. During her career, she has been involved in a variety of projects and initiatives including communications, housing, transportation, and is certified as a Level 1 COR. Prior to joining ACL, she was an Independent Living Supervisor at a Center for Independent Living. Jennifer graduated from Longwood University with a Bachelor of Arts in English, a Master of Arts in Gerontology and an Executive Certificate in Home Modifications from the University of Southern California. Originally from Virginia, Jennifer has traveled across the United States and abroad. She resides in Washington, DC. In her spare time, she enjoys cooking, participating in adaptive yoga, visiting museums, and watching classic films.

Jeremy Morris is the Executive Director of the Ohio SILC. Before joining the SILC in 2017, Jeremy had spent almost 10 years working in Independent Living, previously serving as the Executive Director of the Access Center in Dayton, OH

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and Finance Coordinator at the Western Reserve ILC in Warren, Ohio. His background in CILs includes direct services, advocacy and community partnerships, and operations management. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

Jessica Podesva is the Director of Advocacy and Public Policy at the National Council on Independent Living. Prior to this role, Jessica worked at the Boston Center for Independent Living (BCIL) as a Senior Community Organizer working primarily on healthcare and transportation issues, including improving Massachusetts's non-emergency medical transportation program and working with the state's Medicaid agency to shorten the timelines for wheelchair repairs.

Prior to working at BCIL, Jessica worked as an Equal Justice Works Fellow at Greater Boston Legal Services, where she provided advocacy to ensure that people with disabilities had access to integrated and respectful healthcare in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Jessica has a Juris Doctor degree from New England Law Boston and a B.A. in Communications from SUNY Plattsburgh.

Joan LaBelle is the Executive Director of APRIL. Most recently she was the ADA Coordinator for the City and County of Denver.

Joan has worked with Centers for Independent Living and Statewide Independent Living Councils across the country. She has lived with her disability since the age of five. Serving in every position within Centers for Independent Living (CIL) across the country, she has more than 40 years (both as a youth and an adult) within the disability movement. In particular, she has focused on oversight and expansions of programs, which included ensuring quality assurance and meeting regulations for a CIL from a variety of funding sources.

Additionally, Joan has been active on SILCs across the country, serving on committees, partnering in SPIL development, and monitoring, 501c3 development and implementation and strategic planning/development. She has been Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary. Joan has been a local, state, and national presenter on a variety of topics ranging from technical Funding Formulas to fun Independent Living Jeopardy.

Karen Gridley, Executive Director, Missouri Statewide Independent Living Council (MO SILC). Karen Gridley has dedicated over 20 years to the Independent Living movement, advocating for accessibility, inclusion, and empowerment for individuals with disabilities. As the Executive Director of MO

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SILC, she works to enhance statewide policies, programs, and initiatives that promote independent living.

With a background in Paralegal Studies, Karen brings a strong foundation in policy analysis and advocacy. Her involvement with MO SILC predates her current role, having served as a dedicated member before stepping into leadership.

In her commitment to supporting individuals with disabilities, Karen played a pivotal role in creating a Benefits Enrollment Center at a Center for Independent Living. This initiative helps people access essential benefit programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, and SNAP, ensuring they receive the resources they need to live independently.

Her passion for independent living, combined with years of hands-on experience, positions her as a key advocate for positive change in Missouri's disability community.

Mel Leviton is the Executive Director of the Idaho State Independent Living Council. She has been with the SILC since 2015 and has more than 30 years' experience working with and for people with disabilities in the private, non-profit and public sectors. In addition to her professional work, Mel shares the experience of being a person with visible and invisible disabilities. She has a strong belief in the ability of a person to know what they like, want and need no matter their disability – be it their favorite and least favorite foods, room temperature, place to live, who will help them or where to vacation. Problems arise when the people and systems around them don't communicate – listen and speak in a way that works for the person with a disability. People are not problems to be solved, inaccessible buildings, communication methods, transportation and systems are the problem. Access means we get what we need in a way that works best for us, not the person next to us.

Mellie Adu is the Chief Executive of Strategy and Innovation at Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council. Mellie has worked at Centers for Independent Living in three states, and truly didn't anticipate that the transition into SILC work would be as rich, relevant, and rewarding, as it has become over the past decade and counting. With insight into SILCs as a Council member, Committee member, employee, consultant, and SILC executive, Mellie believes that SILCs are critical, strategic, and change agents at the core.

Paula McElwee is the Director of Technical Assistance, for the IL-NET National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Independent Living the Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities at the University of Montana. Beginning in 1979 Paula McElwee directed Link, Inc., based in Hays, Kansas, one of the first

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ten states funded through the Rehabilitation Act. She worked in the disability field in Kansas for 25 years, and was appointed by two governors to serve three terms on the Statewide Independent Living Council of Kansas.

In 2000 McElwee relocated to Fresno, California, where she has served on the board of Resources for Independence of the Central Valley, a long-standing California Center.

Between 2006 and 2012 she has also served as interim executive director for four centers for independent living in California, assisting the boards to transition to their next executive director. She has consulted with the state association, California Foundation for Centers for Independent Living, and in centers in Berkeley, Concord, Fairfield, Bakersfield, San Jose, Gilroy, San Mateo, San Francisco, and Fresno.

In October, 2012, McElwee began as the Technical Assistance Director through ILRU's IL-NET program, providing individual technical assistance and group and individual training to centers and SILCs throughout the country, utilizing a team of experienced executive directors of CILs and SILCs in addition to her own expertise. McElwee has a chronic pain disability related to arthritis and fibromyalgia, and a neurological condition that can cause speech arrest. McElwee received her Masters in Rehabilitation Administration from the University of San Francisco in 1984.

In her free time McElwee gardens, nurtures the front yard bird habitat, is training a puppy, and enjoys time with the 8- and 10-year-old grandchildren who live nearby.

Peter J. Pike, Program Manager at Colorado Office of Independent Living Services - Peter J. Pike has over 30 years' experience assisting individuals with disabilities navigating public assistance programs, obtaining employment, and living independently. He currently serves as the Program Manager of the Office of Independent Living Services with the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. In this position, he manages state contracts with the nine Centers for Independent Living. He works with the governor appointed Colorado Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) in fulfilling their mission to develop and monitor the State Plan for Independent Living.

Mr. Pike is the Director of two nationally funded research projects. Each project is testing an intervention that supports individuals applying for SSA disability programs and keeping/finding employment. He serves as the Director for a 5-year random assignment research project called Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability (SEEKS) funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research. This project is testing an intervention to improve gross monthly income, employment outcomes and

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community participation for people with disabilities. Mr. Pike also is the Director of the SSA Interventional Cooperative Agreement Program. This 5-year project promotes self-sufficiency by helping people enter, stay in, or return to the labor force, including youth; and assists claimants in underserved communities apply/appeal for Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

Previously, Mr. Pike served as the Executive Director for the Colorado Disability Benefits Support Program (DBS), nonprofit. Colorado DBS provided direct SSA disability benefits application assistance, statewide training, and technical assistance on conducting application assistance.

Sandra Breitengross Bitter is the Project Director of the IL-NET IL T&TA Center at the University of Montana Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities. She served as the IL-NET Director of Training at ILRU and spent 10 years at the Texas SILC in leadership positions, collaborating with stakeholders, policymakers, and CILs. She has over 20 years of experience working in non-profit and government organizations. Breitengross Bitter holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science with an emphasis in Public Administration and is pursuing her Master of Public Administration at Purdue University. She identifies as a Hispanic, neurocomplex individual with lived experience in mental health.

Sarah Goldman - Sarah received her Bachelor of Social Work degree from the University Central Florida and furthered her education by earning a Master's in Social Work from Florida State University. Sarah has used her education and experiences as an individual with a disability to advocate for others. Before joining FILC in 2020, Sarah worked as a legislative aide for four years in the Florida Legislature. She has been recognized for her achievements as an advocate for community integration, inclusion, and employment initiatives for those with disabilities. Sarah is dedicated to working with youth with disabilities, inspiring them to discover their voices and become the next generation of leaders.

Stephanie Miller entered the world of emergency management in 2015, working for the Maricopa County Department of Emergency Management (MCDEM). Knowing that parts of the community are disproportionately affected by disasters and large-scale emergencies, she utilized her bachelor's in justice studies to strive for inclusion in emergency management, especially for those who have disabilities. With her communications position at MCDEM, she endeavored to make digital media accessible. Her emergency management career pivoted when she accepted a position with the Arizona Statewide

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Independent Living Council (AZSILC) where she serves as Emergency Preparedness Equity Educator and continues to bridge the gap between emergency management professionals and the disability community.

Susan Molloy has been working toward access and civil rights for people with disabling environmental sensitivities for over 40 years. She has worked for CILs in Arizona and California. She serves on Arizona’s Statewide Independent Living Council, and NCIL’s Housing Committee. In 2005, she was appointed to serve on the U.S. Access Board-funded National Institute of Building Sciences' Indoor Environmental Quality Committee. Susan led advocacy efforts resulting in two grants, from U.S. Housing and Urban Development and from Arizona’s Department of Housing, to construct two wheelchair-accessible rental properties for low-income people with environmental sensitivities, eleven located in San Rafael, California and four in Snowflake, Arizona. She received NCIL’s 2018 Women’s Caucus Award and served as subject of the documentary film “The Sensitives”, which was shown at the Tribeca Film Festival and numerous European venues. Susan has a Masters’ degree in Disability Policy and resides in Snowflake, Arizona.

Whitney Doyle is the Director of Operations and Capacity Building at the Amputee Coalition. Whitney has extensive advocacy and grassroots leadership experience and previously served as the Executive Director of the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology, Inc. Her disability advocacy work started in 2008, when she joined the Florida Youth Council and became a volunteer at the Florida Youth Leadership Forum. Being inspired by others who have disabilities has led her to become an active member of the Florida Independent Living Council’s board of directors and the National Council on Independent Living’s finance committee. Whitney has a master’s degree in nonprofit management from the University of Central Florida and became a certified nonprofit professional in 2023.

NOTES:

SILC Congress Executive Committee:

Chair: Brooke Wilson
Organization: Oregon SILC
Email: brooke.wilson@odhs.oregon.gov

Vice Chair: Mel Leviton
Organization: Idaho SILC
Email: mel.leviton@silc.idaho.gov

Treasurer: Sidna Madden
Organization: Oklahoma SILC
Email: smadden@oksilc.org

Secretary: Gloria Garton
Organization: North Carolina SILC
Email: gloria.garton@nc-silc.org

Regional Rep Chair: Carrie England
Organization: California SILC
Email: carrie@calsilc.ca.gov

NOTES:

Your Regional Rep: _____
Organization: _____
Email: _____

Other Region Contacts: _____
Organization: _____
Email: _____

Other Region Contacts: _____
Organization: _____
Email: _____

Other Region Contacts: _____
Organization: _____
Email: _____

27th Annual SILC Congress Business Meeting:

Wednesday, March 12, 2025 10:45 am – 12:00 pm
Rosen Centre Hotel – Salon 9/10
9840 International Dr., Orlando, FL 32819

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Treasurers report
3. Committee Reports
 - a. Bylaws
 - i. Discussion and approval of proposed amendments
 - b. Advocacy & Outreach
 - c. Membership and Nominations
 - d. Conference Planning
4. Election of SILC Congress Chair and Treasurer
5. Recognition of new Regional Representatives (Regions 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10)
6. Other Business

NOTES:

**National Association of Statewide Independent
Living Councils, Inc. (NASILC)
Proposed Bylaw Amendments 2025**

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Section 2: Effective Date

Article IX: Dissolution

ARTICLE I - NAME AND CORPORATE STATUS

Section 1: Name - The name of the organization is the National Association of Statewide Independent Living Councils, Inc.

Section 2: Corporate Status - The National Association of Statewide Independent Living Councils, Inc., hereinafter referred to as NASILC, is a 501 (c) (3) charitable, non-profit corporation.

Section 3: Principal Office - The principal office of NASILC shall be located at 22075 189th St., Tonganoxie, KS 66086, in Leavenworth County, with a mailing address of the same. We've discussed getting a storefront box with a street address and mail handling. (future address to be inserted)

Section 4: Fiscal Year - The fiscal year of NASILC shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December of each year.

ARTICLE II - MISSION/VISION/PURPOSE

Section 1: Mission To provide resources to SILCs in the US and territories and promote collaboration with their partners to advance Independent Living values.

Section 2: Vision Accessibility for all, inclusion for all, Independent Living for all.

Section 3: Purpose NASILC shall provide education and offer peer sharing on the roles and responsibilities of Statewide Independent Living Councils. Provide resources to Statewide Independent Living Councils and promote collaboration with their partners to advance Independent Living philosophy and values and to encourage networking opportunities with various national partners. NASILC will provide a unified voice of Statewide Independent Living Councils.

ARTICLE III - DIVERSITY INCLUSION/ ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

NASILC is committed to diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. NASILC will ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with or exceed legal accessibility requirements outlined in federal legislation and guidance. To ensure diversity, inclusion, and accessibility, NASILC will consider disability, culture, and language preferences in all its actions. This includes, but is not limited to, assuring that any meetings, conferences, events, materials, and websites are accessible, offering materials and resources in multiple and alternative formats as requested and required, using plain language in all documents and presentations, providing language access (translation and interpretation services) upon timely request, and being responsive to the interpersonal styles, attitudes, and language of its members.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Qualification for Voting Membership All federally recognized Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs).

Section 2: Associate Membership (non-voting) Likeminded organizations and individuals who wish to participate in NASILC events and activities.

Section 3: Membership Period shall be for a period in alignment with the calendar year (January 1st through December 31st).

Section 4: Dues Amounts Will be set annually for voting and associate members by the Board of Directors. Dues are non-refundable, and not pro-rated.

ARTICLE V - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1: Composition The NASILC Board of Directors shall have up to 14 members.

a) The Board of Directors is made up of:

1. Four (4) Officers elected by membership.
2. Ten (10) Regional representatives – elected within their regions.

b) Qualifications:

1. All members of the Board of Directors must be the designated and supported representative for their Statewide Independent Living Council.
2. The SILC for each member must be in good standing (having paid annual dues) and agree to sponsor the Board member’s involvement.
3. Officers may not serve concurrently on another National IL Executive Board. Exception: the member resigns or terms off the other national Board within six months of election as a NASILC Officer.

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Section 2: Authority Powers and Duties of the Board of Directors: The authority to govern NASILC shall be vested in the Board of Directors, subject to the power and authority of the membership and the limitations on actions by the Board of Directors provided in these Bylaws.

Section 3: Limitation of Authority The Board of Directors may not take the following actions without the approval of the Membership:

1. Subject to the further provisions of these Bylaws in Article VIII, the amendment or repeal of the Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws, or the adoption of new Bylaws.
2. The approval of the merger or transfer of all or substantially all of the assets of NASILC.
3. Action contrary to approved member resolutions.

Section 4: Organizational Representation Agreements The Board of Directors gives discretion to the Executive Committee to collaborate, partner, and endorse projects that align with the purpose, mission and vision of NASILC. This may consist of, but is not limited to, publicly endorsing projects from strategic partners, working in conjunction with strategic partners on education events, providing feedback to strategic partners on issues important to Statewide Independent Living Councils. Any commitments for long-term projects over six months in time will be officially voted on by the committee and reported to the entire board.

Individual endorsements: No member outside of the Executive Committee may act as an official spokesperson for the organization or make commitments on behalf of the organization at any time. This includes individual chairpersons of all NASILC Committees.

Section 5: Duties and Responsibilities of the Board of Directors Board members shall:

1. Attend all Board meetings.
2. Participate in at least one of NASILC's standing committees
3. Assist in the planning of SILC Congress
4. Set policies and goals of the organization.
5. Ensure compliance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations governing non-profit corporations.
6. Review financial reports quarterly and monitor finances to ensure the fiscal integrity of the organization.
7. Ensure sufficient funds are set aside to provide accommodations for all NASILC meetings when accommodations are requested within the timelines set forth in Article VI, Section 4.

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8. Approve the annual organizational budget during the last quarter of the calendar/fiscal year.
9. Biennially review the bylaws, policies, and procedures to ensure the legal integrity of the organization.

Section 6: Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive Committee The Executive Committee shall:

1. Hire and terminate contractors for predetermined scope of work as needed and resources allow.
2. Review financial reports monthly and monitor finances to ensure the fiscal integrity of the organization.
3. The Chairperson, with the aid of the executive committee, is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization, overseeing projects, contracts, consultants and volunteers, including hiring and termination of those parties.
4. The Chairperson serves as a nonvoting member of the Executive Committee, except in instances of a tie vote.
5. Executive Committee members are disqualified from contracting for the organization.
6. The Executive Committee can establish and give charge to any committee of its members, establishing any conditions of committee membership, and ratify committee appointments.
7. The Chairperson of the Board shall appoint chairs of the committees.
8. The Chairperson and the committee chair shall determine committee membership.
9. Set the date, agenda and location of meetings, establish election procedures, provide nomination for elected offices, provide recommendations on state and federal legislation, and report on the status of the corporation.

Section 7: Terms of Office and Elections

1. Officers shall be elected annually by the membership, as set forth by the Policies and Procedures.
 - a. Officers may not serve concurrently on another National IL executive board. Exception: the member resigns or terms off the other national board within six months of election as a NASILC Officer.
 - b. Each term is for two years beginning at the close of the annual Conference.
 - c. Individuals are eligible to serve three full consecutive terms per position as an Officer.
 - d. Chair and Treasurer shall be elected in odd numbered years.
 - e. Vice Chair and Secretary shall be elected in even numbered years.

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2. Regional Representation and Alternates will be elected by each region, during the annual business meeting.
 - a. Regional Representatives shall be eligible to serve multiple two-year terms, for as long as they are elected by their region.
 - b. Regional Representatives must be a designated and supported representative for their Statewide Independent Living Council.
 - c. Odd numbered regions will be elected in even years.
 - d. Even numbered regions will be elected in odd years.
 - e. Regional Representatives shall elect a Region Representative Chair to sit as a voting member on the Executive Committee. This Chair shall be elected in even numbered years.

Section 8: Vacancies

1. Regional Representative Vacancies – When both a Regional Representative and Alternate are not able to fulfill their term, the Executive Committee will request the region appoint a new representative.
2. Chair Vacancy – When the position of Chair becomes vacant, the Vice Chair shall assume the responsibilities of the Chair until the next scheduled election.
3. Officer Vacancies - When an officer, other than Chair is unable to fulfill their term, a call for nominees will go out to the membership and the position shall be filled by a majority vote of the board for the remainder of the term.

Section 9: Removal of Board Members

1. Any member of the Board, including the Chair, may be removed from the Board for an ethics or attendance policy violation by a two-thirds vote of the board. The matter may be considered at a regular or special meeting of the Board. A minimum of 30 calendar days' notice shall be given to any Board member whose removal is being sought, prior to the vote for removal. Upon a vote for removal, removal shall be effective immediately.

Section 10: Board of Directors Voting

1. Each board member has one vote.
2. A simple majority of Board members shall be present to constitute a quorum.
3. Chair (only votes in the case of tie).

ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

Section 1: Meetings of the Board

1. Regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall occur at least four (4) times a year, either in person or by virtual means.

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2. Notice of the date, place, and time of each regularly scheduled meeting will be posted on the website when determined, at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
3. All regularly scheduled meetings agenda will be posted on the NASILC website at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
4. A simple majority of Board members shall be present to constitute a quorum.
5. All meetings of the Board of Directors shall be open to attendance by any member, except when the Board is conducting business in executive session. Executive session will be determined by the laws of Kansas.
6. All meetings of the Board of Directors shall be recorded by the board Secretary or their designee.
7. Records must be maintained. – Votes must be included in minutes.
8. All official Board actions must be included on the agenda and voting may take place within a scheduled Board meeting or via email as appropriate.

Section 2: Annual Membership Meeting

1. Shall be held each year on a day and time specified by the Board.
2. Agenda will be posted on the NASILC website at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
3. A majority of the voting members present shall constitute a quorum.
4. SILCs in good standing are allowed one vote per office/issue.

Annual Membership Meetings consist of the following:

1. Officers and Regional Representatives will be elected at the annual meeting. Elections may be held electronically in advance of the annual business meeting.
2. Committees reviewed/appointed.
3. Written, annual financial report and other reports of the affairs of the corporation shall be considered.
4. Any other business may be transacted, which is within the purview of the Board of Directors.
5. Resolutions discussed and voted on as received from membership.
6. Ratification of Bylaw amendment(s).
 - a. Proposed Bylaw amendments will be provided electronically to membership at least 30 days prior to the annual membership meeting.

Section 3: Special Meetings

1. May be called by the Chair or at request of four (4) Board Members.
2. Notice – The Board Members should be notified ten (10) days prior to a special meeting, or as quickly as is practical in emergency situations.

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Section 4: Accommodations

1. NASILC will hold all its meetings and events in accessible locations.
2. NASILC shall provide reasonable accommodations, upon request, to Board members and others in order that they may fully participate in meetings and other NASILC sponsored activities.
3. Individuals must contact NASILC at least 10 days in advance of a meeting, or sponsored event to request a reasonable accommodation.
4. SILC Congress will have a publicized timeframe for accommodations.
5. Every attempt for accommodations will be made outside of the stated timelines.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

Section 1: Executive/Finance Committee

1. The Executive Committee is made up of four (4) officers elected by membership (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer) and the Region Representative Chair.
2. The NASILC Chairperson will serve as the committee Chair.
 - a. The Vice-chair will serve during meetings in the absence of the Chair.
3. Region Representative Chair elected by all Region Representatives to serve on the Executive Committee from the existing Region Representatives.
4. The Executive Committee has the authority to conduct business between Board meetings, all decisions must be ratified at the next Board meeting.

Section 2: Other Standing Committees

1. Membership and Nomination Committee
2. Conference Committee
3. Advocacy and National Strategy Committee
4. Bylaws, Policies and Procedures

Committee Membership and Priorities

- a) Committee members will be appointed by or at the direction of the NASILC Chair in consultation with the Executive Committee and Committee Chairperson.
- b) Those who serve on a committee must belong to an organization who is a member of NASILC.
- c) Priorities and timelines will be defined and outlined within each committee.

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Section 3: Ad-hoc Committee(s)

Ad-hoc Committees: Committee Chair and members will be appointed by or at the direction of the NASILC Chair and the Committee Chairperson.

ARTICLE VIII: Amendments to Bylaws

Section 1: Amendments - The Board of Directors may from time to time, by a Quorum vote of the membership, amend or repeal any or all Bylaws. A majority of the voting members present shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2: Effective Date - All amendments to these Bylaws shall be effective on the date of approval by the membership.

Section 3: Notification - Notice of any proposed amendment or repeal of these Bylaws by the Board of Directors shall be made available to all members of NASILC, thirty (30) days before the membership meeting.

Article IX: Dissolution

Section 1: Dissolution - In the event of the dissolution of NASILC, the Board of Directors or their designee shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the corporation held exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for the charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United State Internal Revenue law) as the Board of Directors determines. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the District Court of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes. Any remaining assets of NASILC shall be disposed of in conformity with any then applicable statutes of the State of Kansas or the United States.

Federal Regions and Representatives:

Region	States in Region	Current Reps	Email
1	Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont	Aliza Levine (MA) Alt: Molly Cole (CT)	alevine@masilc.org molly@ctsilc.org
2	New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Island	Denise DiNoto (NY) Alt: Vacant	denised@nysilc.org
3	Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia	Kathryn Burritt (DE) Alt: Vacant	keliseburritt@gmail.com
4	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee	Edward Mitchell (TN) Alt: Roshaine Byfield (AL)	silcdirector@silctn.org roshaine@independentrandr.org
5	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin	Tyler Wilcox (WI) Alt: Jeremy Morris (OH)	ilcwcoordinator@il-wis.net jmorris@ohiosilc.org
6	Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas	Vacant Alt: Vacant	
7	Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska	Caleb Primrose (IA) Alt: Karen Gridley (MO)	calebprimrose@aol.com mosilc.ed@gmail.com
8	North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah	Amber Sparks (WY) Alt: Vacant	atsparks0014@gmail.com
9	Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, America Samoa, Guam, CNMI	Carrie England (CA) Alt: Vacant	carrie@calsilc.ca.gov
10	Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington	Jami Davis (ID) Alt: Vacant	jami.davis@silc.idaho.gov

Contacts

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Please complete the 2025 SILC Congress survey and we hope to see you back in Orlando March 16th – 19th, 2026!



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2025SILCCongress>

SAFE TRAVELS!!!

Special Thank You to:



Statewide Independent Living Council



NEW YORK STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL, INC.



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