

SILC quarterly meeting. September 13, 2007
Best Western Hotel & Conference Center, Marlborough MA

Meeting opened at 1:30 p.m.

Attendees: Nancy Rumbolt-Trczynski, Chair, Karen Bureau Secretary, Filomena Tripp Treasurer, Bernard Bonsra Vice Chair, Shawn McDuff, Anita Allbright, Jim Tierney, Dawn Clark, Betty King, Eileen Brewster, Marylyn Howe, Joe Bellil, Judy Rodger, Sybil Feldman, Amy Ashdon, Karen Langley

Nominees: Merle Ferber, Carol Hilbinger, Brian Smith, Tony Williams, Keith Jones

Guest: Steve Higgins, Mary Margaret Moore, Holly Vernon, BCIL
Stacey Rogers, BCIL, Andy Forman, BCIL, Sarah Gales, Iris Robichaud, Hollis Cotton, MOD, Naomi Goldberg, MOD, Michael Williams, MILCB, Bill Allan, DPC, Kris Newcomb

Good afternoon, everyone.

Welcome to the Statewide Independent Living Council Meeting. I'm going to ask my friends up here, for those of you who don't know, this is really the only time of the year that we sit like this, but this is your Executive Board for the SILC right here that is sitting with me. So give these guys a round of applause. They are our SILC Chair Nancy Trczynski, Rumbolt-Trzcinsky, Karen Bureau, Karen is our SILC Secretary, Filomena Tripp, who is our SILC Treasurer, Bernard Bonsra, our SILC Vice Chairperson

There are a lot of times when I call them out of nowhere because I need to get something done, and I know every time I'm going to get a call back and get things happening. So there is many, many, many times that you aren't aware of those things have to happen quickly that these guys really make it happen. So for me, working for you guys I need to say thanks for being so responsible because I've worked for boards before, never returned my call, and then blamed me when things didn't get done. You guys are a phenomenal board and I want to say thank you. So thanks.

DPC Report to SILC >>BILL ALLAN: Thank you. And I just want to say thank you to Steve, and to Nancy, and to everyone because it was actually a fabulous three days at this years SILC Conference.

You know, as most of you know, we maintain a pretty hefty presence on Beacon Hill, and on behalf of the SILC and other folks with disabilities, we do, in deed, have a cross-disability legislative platform that we are constantly putting forth. We are up there on budget issues. This last year, we fought, not successfully, but we fought for more money for supportive living, and some has gone onto Independent Living Centers, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Independent Living Centers, and some house maker items at MRC and MCB. So we'll be back to visiting those issues, hopefully -- hopefully we won't have to visit them next January. Our message to the new administration has been very clear. And we met with Dr. McGuire on a couple of occasions. That we expect the Patrick Administration to put some serious money in disability funding this year. That we will work, it will make our job a lot easier, to hold that kind of money in the House and Senate than it is to try to get

it from scratch. When the justification isn't there, it isn't forthcoming from the -- from the program people in the agencies. That's been one of the problems that we have run up against constantly.

I also want to review, quickly, what our legislative priorities are because in some cases the SILC's legislative priorities. In 2003, we started with some Olmstead legislative -- excuse me, with Olmstead Challenge Conferences. Altering Medicaid's community practices.

We worked, you know, in prior legislative session, to get -- we started out calling for a new department to show these folks, and it was just sort of a wake-up call to get it on the agenda. Well, it got as far as House Ways and Means last year -- last session. It is currently the same legislation, the legislation that came out of Healthcare Finance no longer calls for a new department, but really directs the Secretary, using the contractual powers, to provide services, provide information referral. We also asked that the cost of this program in the next couple years is \$6- to \$700,000 is a drop in the bucket. That is currently before Children and Families. And we expect it to be reported out as early as late September.

Our legislation is being heard before the Joint Committee on Education, on higher education, the legislation would increase the training programs, the classes in Deaf Studies and ASL across the state in the community college system and establish a four-year program at Framingham State, which would be the new requirements for the -- for interpreters as of 2012.

BILL ALLEN: We are going heard next Tuesday, this is a simple little paragraph that says there shall be assumption of eligibility for personal care attendants currently. If you're coming out of a hospital, and you don't really need rehab care, or you don't need intensive nursing home care, but you do need some assistance, you still wait 90 days to get a personal care attendant. It's the same thing that affects the work of people coming out of nursing homes, the independent living centers they're working with. So we're suggesting is a change in the regulations, by legislation, that would give us 60 days of the presumption of eligibility for personal care attendants with Medicaid. It's something the administration can change overnight. We put it on the board and they're very well aware. Commissioner Carr and the DPC talked on Monday and we believe he may be in a position to support this legislation or come to testify as to its importance. So we'll be looking for some support. Paul Spooner is on top of it, Mary Margaret and Jim from Stavros, so we're looking for some folks there with some stories and underscore the importance of that, to people's lives.

The last bill I want to mention is a bill that would bring the Architectural Access Board into compliance -- into conformance, excuse me, conformance with the ADA, so that builders and architects would not have to worry about two sets of regulations, do I meet the ADA or do I meet the Architectural Access Board. There are a couple of things important and a lot of language in there that needs to be cleaned up and changed. It's a very technical bill, for the most part and one of the things that we'll do, we'll bring employee areas into the jurisdiction of the Architectural Access Board. Currently an employer can build a huge factory, and have a showroom, where he sells

directly to the public. The showroom has to be made accessible. The factory does not. So that has to change. And that will change with this legislation. I do know some of you are aware of the controversy over the nature of who appoints the board, who appoints the members of the Architectural Access Board and indeed the legislation that is currently in the House and Senate would alter that, giving AAB more of a direct role in recommending employment. That has raised some questions from Mass Office on Disability, and I've heard good arguments here today that support the existing, the way it's done today. I have it directly from Tom Hopkins that they would revert back to the legislation as currently in place regarding appointments so, that should be able to happen within a couple of weeks, so it's not been marked up for hearing yet, but we expect that will be changed before the time that there's a hearing, and we would love for this community, their strong support on changing the Architectural Access Board laws to conform with the ADA.

Very quickly, we've heard about emergency preparedness today. I'm not going to go into that into any detail, other than to say we maintain our vigilance and maintain our mailing list of over 700 people that includes people with disabilities, emergency preparedness, first responders, state officials, and others who are interested in emergency preparedness. We try to provide current up-to-date, latest information from the Feds and what's happening at other states and what's happening in our own state.

We also have taken on the universal access program as one of our stepchildren. You know, under DCR or under the Department of Conservation and Recognize this program was primarily in the part of the state. They do great stuff if you can get to Gardner.

STEVE HIGGINS: Paul, our advocacy committee chair, has already left to go to that meeting at the State House so he's asked me to fill in on that. That's why we put Bill ahead of approval of minutes, if he hadn't mentioned it, I was going to let you guys know why we did that, the numbers, as Bill mentioned, they're holding a meeting this afternoon.

Approval of Minutes

Those of you that are SILC members would have received your minutes in advance, so you had the time to read through them, and we didn't want to kill a million and a half trees because there are about 10 or 15 pages long, so I need at this point to see if anybody had any questions for Karen Bureau or myself. Could I have a microphone over to Dawn Clark, please.

DAWN CLARK: I'd like to make a motion that we approve the minutes.

Judy Rodger: Second.

STEVE HIGGINS: There was a motion by Dawn Clark to approve the minutes, a second by Judy Roger.

NANCY RUMBOLT-TRZCINSKI: Any more discussion? Hearing none, all in favor?

All: Aye.

Nancy: Opposed? Abstained? The minutes are approved.

SILC Chairs Report, Nancy Trzcinski

I've just been doing work with the SILC, attending committee meetings, talking to Steve, we've been busy with the conference planning and everything. I got a chance to attend the NCIL conference in July. It was, you know, fun and educational, as always, busy. I did that on top of attending the ACB convention, back-to-back, so by the time I was done with NCIL, I was, you know, feeling pretty tired, but I've been doing just basic work of the SILC

State Plan for Independent Living Committee Report

MARY MARGARET MOORE: Seriously, this is my chance to let you guys know, as a SILC, how we've done at meeting the requirements that we set forth in our State Plan, and I have lots of paper here, but you don't want that. The bottom line is, in the current SPIL, that ends September 30th, it looks as though, other than with membership and not quite hitting the target we wanted for new monies, although we came very close, we seem to have implemented, over the three years, all the key things we said we were going to do. We did the redistricting, and the realignment of the centers, except for the two that were geographically, you know, bound. We followed the formula for any additional new money, and we dealt with some of the cuts, according to what was in there. We dealt with the proposals for Part B funding, and having the three options, you know, of the limits for under client services for particular services, or to submit a proposal, to do a particular project, or option three, a combination of both. We've also dealt with a priority of expanding the network of services from 10 to 11 which meant help deal with the Vivienne Thomson Center being put tout to bid and we got to welcome the Multicultural Center to strengthen the current network of centers, at 11, and by the way, welcome aboard, Multicultural Center.

So overall, we did an awful lot of work. We also did our forums around the State and for the State Plan that's now beginning October 1st, that we're still awaiting final approval on, from RSA. But basically, we held forums, and this year, this past year, we held a forum at a SILC meeting, right after a SILC meeting at Natick.

We did the two compliance reviews under this three-year plan, we did two of them, and have One more to go this month.

So we've also been doing compliance reviews.

I say to you all, there's more to do, and congratulations to the SILC for, you know, doing, I'd say about, 96% of what we said we were going to do in the three years' time. Congratulations. And I

want to call to your attention, in the new State Plan, that goes into effect in two and a half weeks?

MARY MARGARET: We have even more exciting work to do, because we have made changes on Part B in terms of the funding limits. Make sure you read that in the State Plan. We have made changes in the allocation formula, and we have a pretty hefty advocacy agenda and in addition we've still got to recruit more members to the SILC who represent the cross-disability consumer representation that's critical. So congratulations, and let's move forward.

KAREN LANGLEY: I wanted to make sure people, since we have a bigger crowd, one other aspect of the new State Plan, because it does relate to advocacy for the FY '09 budget, in addition to getting funds for the existing centers, we really are looking for funds for a new satellite and/or center that's going to be located in the northwest part of BCIL's existing territory, so take a piece of northern part of BCIL, southern part of northeast independent living. It's an active that the committee worked on over the last two to three years and it is in the first year of the State Plan is the activity to start with the advocacy committee, working with the legislators, and the other consumers in that area, so it's an important piece that we need to be linking with BCIL early on, as the budget process gets started.

Nancy: Do I hear a motion to accept Mary Margaret's report?

SYBIL FELDMAN: Aye.

STEVE HIGGINS: Second Betty J. king.

Nancy: Hearing no further discussion, all in favor?

All: Aye.

Nancy: Opposed? Abstained? Okay, great. Thanks, Mary Margaret.

Treasurer's Report, Filomena Tripp

FILOMENA TRIPP: The financial committee report for the SILC meeting, September 12th, 2007. The financial committee has been meeting regularly since the last SILC meeting. The committee meeting happens via teleconference on the first Tuesday of every month, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. If anyone would like one for the review of the contents, contact Steven Higgins and he will send one out to you. The finance committee presents the following budget for Federal Fiscal Year 2008 for your approval today:

2008 SILC Budget Categories

Category _____ FY 08'

Consultants	\$87,000.00
The SILC coordinator, Disability policy position, and Web Page Contractor are listed in this category.	
SILC Travel/Conf. Expenses	\$ 8,000.00
This category is where travel to conferences and special events by the SILC coordinator & Designated SILC members is counted IE: the NCIL Conference in DC and the annual National SILC Congress.	
Meeting Transportation	\$ 4,500.00
This category is for transportation to and from SILC quarterly and committee meetings for council members & nominees.	
Quarterly/Committee Meetings	\$ 4,000.00
This category cover cost related to the quarterly meetings of the entire body & committee meetings held throughout the year.	
Reasonable Accommodation Aids	\$ 1,500.00
This category covers cost related to providing reasonable accommodations at meeting of the council such as PCA's and the production of Braille.	
ASL Interpreters	\$ 5,250.00
This category covers the cost of obtaining Sign Language Interpreters for meetings of the council and its committees.	
CART Reporters	\$ 7,422.00
This category covers the cost of obtaining CART reporters for meetings of the council and its committees.	
Supplies & Postage	\$ 2,028.00
This category covers the cost of supplies and postage for the day to day operation of the SILC Office.	
Telephone & Teleconferencing	\$ 5,000.00
This category covers the cost of the regular SILC phone bill and the cost of teleconference calls held by the SILC & its Committees throughout the year.	
SILC Web Page	\$ 500.00
This is the annual cost for hosting the SILC web page and maintaining of the MILAN email list, which is used as an alert system by the SILC Advocacy committee.	
Copying/printing	\$ 2,000.00
This category covers the cost of copying materials for meetings of the council as well as special printing such as the annual SILC brochure, SILC stationary & envelopes.	
Insurance	\$ 0.00

Advocacy Committee Report STEVE HIGGINS: Thanks. Paul asked me if I could just fill you in briefly on advocacy. Karen earlier mentioned an issue, as we move into the next Fiscal Year that we are looking at, and that is that we need to advocate for the additional funds to increase the number of centers within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. How can you have a state with 11 Independent Living Centers, and still consider parts of the state underserved? Well, when we look at the work that we all do, it is quite impossible for someone like BCIL to serve as many people as are there in that entire area. They do a great job, but they are not magicians. There is no other way to put it.

We are also advocating for funds to increase the funds at the existing network of centers within the state. As you heard Mary Margaret talk about in the State Plan for Independent Living Report, there is still a large need for funds at every center in this state. There is not one center in the State of Massachusetts that truly has the funding that it needs to do the work that is done by the centers every day. So that's the next step. We'll be advocating for funding for more centers in the state.

We are also in the process of working with the State House to set up times that we can get up there to do our Advocacy Days at the State House as we go forward. This year we had two Advocacy Days at the State House. In March we did our annual day where we have our rally at the Grand Staircase. We get the opportunity to go out and meet with the Legislators.

In May, we did a lunch with the legislators, which is a very open luncheon, where we ask each Independent Living Center to come and participate, and sit, and invite their Legislators to come into the room and eat a sandwich with them. Because quite frankly, when we put our faces in front of their faces, now we know who each other are, and it gives us the ability to get work happening at the State House, which is a phenomenal thing.

A lot of folks ask what the relationship is with the DPC and the SILC? The SILC as part of our budget several years ago, was looking for a consultant, a way to have advocacy happening at the State House if we needed to get the word out. We need to train younger people on how to do advocacy, and we had trouble at that time finding someone. And then we thought of a unique way we could do it, and that was having the Disability Policy Consortium, who is already working with younger people and training people, partnering with the SILC as the consultant. And what's resulted in that is we have got a working relationship with the DPC. We have folks when we need folks at the State House there. And they have also continued, throughout the entire contract, to foster bringing in new people and young people to the DPC so that we can train new, young advocates.

The new state plan outlines advocacy priorities we are looking at for the next three years. And we'll fit the advocacy priorities of the SILC into each of those goals, to be able to accomplish them in a certain period.

MARY MARGARET MOORE: As your Rep the State Rehabilitation Council, we would like to make sure that we are doing a lot -- doing joint advocacy events. And there's a Subcommittee of the SRC that is looking to maybe do something in November, and that we are going to include the SILC in. So I'm

on that Subcommittee, and as we know, Joe Bellil is the Chair of the SRC. So I just want to remind us about that, as another partna (with Boston accent), and mention that.

>>STEVE HIGGINS: What the SILC Advocacy Committee does is the Advocacy Committee Chair, Paul and his co-chair, Janet, look at the SPIL. And the goal is to fit all of the things that are happening on the state level into the goals that were set, sometimes in some cases, up to three years ago, in the case of this past year, those were some goals we set three years ago. And so the Committee -- the job of the Committee Chair is to take what we write as the advocacy goals for the year, and bring those to the Advocacy Committee, and determine what -- how we are going to implement those goals, and how we are going to implement new things that are happening on the state level, into the goal that we have set already, to make it work, and make it happen.

>>KEITH JONES: One of the things I don't know if this is in the areas of advocacy, but I would really, personally, like to see the SILC take a more public and stronger stance on parenting/education through graduation, college, not just high school.

>>MARY MARGARET MOORE: Keith, I fought very hard to make sure that would be in the State Plan. As well as Joe Tringali. Our voices were very loud throughout the whole State Plan.

>>MARY MARGARET MOORE: Just on those issues, as soon as the State Plan is approved, it is going to go up on the web page of the SILC, but if you want to get a copy, or any of you, the draft we submitted, to just read all of this stuff that is in the pre-print of the Feds, so don't be upset with me on how it is written, I had to follow their rules and get the stuff in there, I'm sure that Steve would send you a copy, and have you be reassured, and that we did get it into the State Plan priorities. How's that?

>>KAREN LANGLEY: I just wanted to reiterate something that Bill Henning said yesterday about the advocacy issues that is upcoming right now. We have seen -- we have seen in the Housing Bond Bill the cap, every year there is a cap, that is a dollar amount assigned for housing, and the disability related programs of FCF, which is Facilities Consolidation Fund. And that's for developing new housing for people with mental retardation and mental health. They got cut.

The Community-based Housing Program, which is geared to getting people out of institutional placements or keeping them out, that was cut.

The Housing Innovation Fund was also cut. And that's the money that pretty much goes to support a homelessness agenda. So building single-room occupancies, that was cut.

And the Home Modification Loan Program, which provides loans for people to modify their homes, that was cut.

Those four were the only programs in the housing system that was cut. And that is just not acceptable.

Commissioner Carr is meeting with Under Secretary Tina Reed -- no. Not Tina Reed. Tina Brooks at DHCD on the 20th. And he will reiterate his wishes to have those increased.

>>NANCY RUMBOLT-TRCZYZSKI: And also, this is a reminder that any SILC Member or any member can join Paul's Committee, the Advocacy Committee, and you can be a little, you know, just really get in on the, you know, on the nuts and bolts of what he is doing.

>>STEVE HIGGINS: Yes.

>>NANCY RUMBOLT-TRCZYZSKI: It is the second Thursday. And every SILC Member is supposed to be involved in a Committee, and that is a good one to work on.

Motion to accept report, JIM TIERNEY:

Second, Judi Rodger.

NANCY RUMBOLT-TRCZYZSKI: All in favor?

Aye.

NANCY RUMBOLT-TRCZYZSKI: Opposed? Abstained?

Nominations & Development Committee Report STEVE HIGGINS:

Mike Kennedy submitted his report prior to the meeting, and he asked me if I could read it for him. The nominations and development committee has been meeting regularly in between quarterly meetings. The committee meets similar to the finance committee, on the first Tuesday of every month from 2:00 to 3:00pm.

The September meeting is the date where we annually elect our officers. The nominations and development committee has recommended that we put forth the following slate of officers for federal fiscal year 2008. Nancy Rumbolt-Trzcinski as Chairperson, Bernard Bonsra vice chair, Filomena Tripp as treasurer and Karen Bureau as secretary. All of those people are sitting up here with me right now. They are all your current board of officers and they are all eligible and willing to serve one more year.

The current slate of SILC members awaiting reappointments from the Gubernatorial appointments office are Pat Estrella, Amy Ashdon, Karen Bureau, Mike Kennedy, Sharon Liberty, Nancy Rumbolt-Trzcinski, and Joe Tringali. It's just a matter of the larger appointments, meeting commissioners and things, needed to take place first.

We also have six -- seven nominees that are waiting for appointment at the Gubernatorial Office of Appointments, and these folks, you'll notice some of them are sitting in the room today. Brian Smith, Merle Ferber, Keith Jones, Tony Williams, Robert Barker and Carol Hilbinger.

STEVE HIGGINS: Are there any other questions on the nominations? We actually need a motion to accept the report before we can move into the election of officers.

Motion to accept by Dawn Clark

second by Joe Bellil.

NANCY: Thanks a lot, Steve, do hear any more discussion? All in favor?

All: Aye.

NANCY: Opposed? Abstained? Okay, thanks. It carries.

Election of Officers for Federal Fiscal Year 2008 STEVE HIGGINS:

Okay, so the next part of the nominations and development committee, this is of course our annual meeting, where we hold our election of officers. The nominations and development committee has put forth a slate of officers for going into federal fiscal year 2008.

Our current officers, which we elected last year, are in office through September 30th of this year. So beginning on October 1st is when we would begin federal fiscal year 2008. The four existing officers of the SILC have all agreed to serve one more year in the current position that they are in. No other folks had come forward being interested in being officers. Although this is an open election, nominations for the SILC officers can be accepted from the floor. So in a moment, we'll get to that part and I'll kind of explain the whole election process.

The nominations committee has selected as a slate of officers for federal fiscal year 2008

Nancy Rumbolt-Trzcinski as the chairperson

Bernard Bonsra as the vice chair

Filomena Tripp as the treasurer

Karen Bureau as the secretary

So the process for elections would be as follows. Should there be no nominations from the floor and there's a motion to close nominations, then the secretary of the SILC can cast one signed certified ballot, signifying the election, and the election would be that the slate of officers be accepted.

Should someone be nominated from the floor to run against, say, each of the four people, then we would need to do a paper ballot with the names of each person, and who will be running against them. Should one person be nominated from the floor for one position, there could be a motion from the floor that the secretary cast one ballot, to accept the three positions that are uncontested, and then a paper ballot would need to be printed, which will take us a few minutes to do, and that

position we would need to hold a paper ballot.

In order to certify the ballot, three people would need to count the ballot. That would be Amy Ashdon, as a representative from the nominations and development committee, which was agreed upon in the committee meeting Karen Langley from the DSU and Kris Newcomb a non interested party.

So the election process of officers is now considered open. The SILC nominations and development committee recommends this slate, as I said early of Nancy Rumbolt-Trzcinski as chairperson, Bernard Bonsra as vice chair, Filomena Tripp as treasurer, and Karen Bureau as secretary. By opening nominations from the floor, are there nominations for any of those four positions on the slate of officers? Hearing no other nominations, and I'm being very clear about it, I would like to hear a motion that the nominations be closed from the floor.

Motion made by Joe Bellil.

Second Shawn McDuff.

Is there any discussion? All those in favor of closing nominations, signify by saying aye.

All: Aye.

STEVE HIGGINS: All opposed? Abstentions? The motion carries.

So now comes the next step. Now that the motion is carried, we need to hear a motion from the floor signifying that the secretary cast one ballot in representation of the entire SILC body, one ballot, electing Nancy Rumbolt-Trzcinski as chairperson, Bernard Bonsra as vice chair, Filomena Tripp as treasurer, and Karen Bureau as secretary. Now, I just need to ask a point of order question, I'm going to ask it of Mary Margaret because she's been a Parliamentarian in the past. Karen would be able to cast the ballot because she's the current secretary?

MARY MARGARET: Yes.

STEVE HIGGINS: I just wanted to get clarification from a Parliamentarian on that. We need a motion that the secretary cast the ballot.

Anita Amy Ashdon makes the motion that the secretary cast one ballot.

Second Betty J. King.

Is there any discussion? All in favor of the motion, signify by saying aye.

All: Aye.

STEVE HIGGINS: All opposed? Abstentions? The motion carries. The secretary has a ballot which she will mark an "X" next to each of the names and she will sign and date and certify that ballot. That was pre-prepared, just in case. So it is here, so that will be on file, and so once again, ladies and gentlemen, our officers for 2008, federal fiscal year 2008 are joining me at the front table so

please, give them a round of applause.

SILC Coordinators Report STEVE HIGGINS: There you go. So as all of you know, we finished the 2007 Massachusetts State Independent Living Conference today. I can't say thank you enough to the conference committee, they give me the ideas and guide me as to what they would like to see, and then it's my job to make it all happen, and so I just want to say thanks, because there's not one person on that committee that I couldn't have tapped their shoulder in the middle of the conference, and I did that a few times, and said what do I do? During the conference, the folks from New York that did a couple of our workshops, the RTC folks, they have a bunch of trainings and workshops that they do, and a bunch that are on DVD. They came up to me and they gave me a really nice gift, and so we're going to keep that gift at the SILC. They said do what you want with it, give it to somebody, do whatever, but I talked to a couple of committee members, and they agreed with me, that what we're going to do is, the little red wagon full of all training DVDs and CDs and audios and all kinds of things, we're going to keep that on file at the SILC office, and that way, not just one center can take advantage of it, but any center within the state, if you'd like to borrow that at any time, use any of those DVDs for training, or things that come up, all you have to do is let us know.

We have participated in one site review. We have a second site review coming up at the Multicultural Center for independent living in Boston and that's taking place next week, and you know, people sometimes when they go into a site review, they go into it, they're scared crap. Well, frankly, going into the site review, I'm kind of excited going into the next one, because I had the opportunity to talk to Tony, and we're looking at what can come out of this as one of the most positive, great things that's happened at that center, as it moves and goes forward and grows, because what the site review can do is look at where we've been, and say, hey, this is how we need to get to where we want to go, and make things happen. So you know, Tony's starting a new job as an executive director.

>>MARY MARGARET MOORE: There is this group called CESSY.

They have a contract with Social Security Administration, known as SSA, to educate the country about employment networks and Ticket-to-Work, but also to try to recruit agencies to be employment networks, and be able to accept the tickets that are going out, to ensure that people with disabilities get more access to employment.

And they came to me down at NICL because I'm their Region I Rep, and they wanted to do more recruiting up here in the Northeast, and they had Granite State Independent Living Center willing to host employment network meetings with all the CILs and the SILCs up here. And I said I would be willing to, you know, to help with that a bit, if we could have a NICL Region I Coalition Meeting, as

well, so we can do advocacy. So that's going to happen up in Manchester, New Hampshire. And some CILs and SILCs from Region I are going to gather there. And CESSY is going to unveil the new reimbursement regulations that are supposed to go into effect, which should make it more attractive for SILCs or CILs or other -- or other sort of rehab providers, or individuals, to be employment networks.

We are in the process right now of prepping for SILC Congress 2008 which will be taking place the third week in January, New Orleans, Louisiana. I need to say "thank you" to the SILC for the way you guys support me on that. Because a couple years ago, when I went to the first SILC Congress, I talked to Joe and said, "Hey, what is it all about?" And he told me, and Mary Margaret told me. And they both encouraged me to go and participate because they needed to hear some voices from Massachusetts and the Northeast. So low and behold, I've been elected the Secretary of SILC Congress for the entire country, and that takes place down in New Orleans.

(Applause.)

Thanks.

I'm also Mary Margaret's counterpart in Region I in the SILCs because the SILC Congress sets themselves up similar to NICL in that we have Regional Reps. So I'm also the Representative for the Region I, which is the New England states. So I will be the Region I Rep and Secretary for the SILC Congress coming up.

And I believe joining me at SILC Congress this year in -- I'm already saying this year, and it is 2008 because I think in terms of this year meaning the Federal Fiscal Year as I do my work. So joining me for the '08 SILC Congress is, I believe, going to be my compadre sitting to the right of me, Nancy.

>>STEVE HIGGINS: And Mary Margaret came last year, and we -- and SILC Congress was in New Orleans in January of '07, and it was determined that we should go back again in January of '08. And the reason for that is we were there, basically, eighteen months after Katrina. And Mary Margaret can vouch for it. Just the ride from the airport to the hotel. And then walk outside of the hotel's door, and walk along Canal Street. We were there the first week they started to run the trolleys again, but half the stores on Canal Street looked like a bomb had blown up. They had to clean them out with power washers. It was amazing. So we are going back next year to see the progress.

I hear there are phenomenal things going on down there, as I talk to Robert who is the coordinator for the SILC in Louisiana. And Robert and I have a great time. We wanted to meet each other because we are the only two SILCs in the country with coordinators. All the other SILCs have Executive Directors. So we were pretty excited there was another coordinator out there, and that we got to meet each other. So we are preparing for that right now. As we move into that, there is some pretty phenomenal stuff. And that conference this year is going to focus on national SILC issues. Our conference here focused on roots. We are focusing on the roots of SILCs. So in other words, what the heck is a SILC? And what can we really do? And what is it all about?

Our SPIL was submitted. And I'm really happy to report that our SPIL was submitted on-time in Washington DC, and it is awaiting approval.

(Applause.)

Thanks, Mary Margaret.

And we -- and it was kind of interesting because the process that the Feds laid out this year, they actually didn't give us the final document until what was it? Four-and-a-half weeks before the SPIL was due. So we really had four-and-a-half weeks to complete -- it sounds like there is an airplane coming through here or something. We had -- we really had four-and-a-half weeks to complete it, but because we had not paid attention to some things, and we went and did the process of our public hearings around the state and everything, we were able to submit ours.

Currently, as Mary Margaret noted, it is pending. I did speak to Tom Kelly at RSA. I was actually speaking to him on a different issue for SILC Congress when he said, "Your SPIL looks good. We just have a couple of questions; I'll get to you with the questions." So he wasn't concerned.

Now, as Mary Margaret said, we don't believe anything until we see it in writing, so we are waiting for that, but I do know there has been a lot of question and thought that RSA never looked at SPILs and 704s. Well, out of the states, several of the SPILs were rejected. So there was a question as to what is going to happen because Federal Fiscal Year begins in two weeks.

I was told by RSA that if we had anything significant, we would have it in time for today's meeting, which nothing ever came, so I guess that is a good sign, but we'll follow-up with RSA on that.

So our SPIL, currently, is awaiting final approval.

Throughout the SPIL process this year, our SILC was called on by the Vermont SILC, the Connecticut SILC, and Pennsylvania SILC. And in all cases, we travel to or worked with, as far as guidance goes, on preparing state plans. I know some of you guys know I disappeared in the middle of the summer and headed down to Pennsylvania because they were having some significant issues, and needed somebody to mediate between the designated state unit and the SILC, and I spent some time working on that. So we did all that fun stuff, too.

So our SPIL, we are just waiting for the final piece of paper that says it is approved and we'll move on that.

Karen, did you have a question?

Karen Langley who is getting the mic right now, by the way? Mary Margaret reminded me. But Karen Langley did a large amount of work on that SPIL. And like the past whole bunch of SPILs that have been out there, she has done a bunch of work on, and, you know, I have to say, I've been to other states, I've dealt with other DSUs, and it really is, and really has been a pleasure working with Karen on this. You know? There has been things in the SPIL that we don't necessarily agree on 100% or stuff like that, but that's a good thing because that means we are all at least thinking, and thinking forward, and trying to think what is best. And really, a personal thank you to Karen because Karen, your work within the SPIL Committee, and your work within all the stuff that you've done here at the SILC has been much appreciated as, you know, as equal partners. You truly do reach out as

an equal partner when it says that the SILC needs to have equal partners in government, you truly do reach out as an equal partner, and that is a phenomenal thing working together.

>>STEVE HIGGINS: It's going to be rejected. The Federal Government does a thing, they wait until midnight when they are supposed to approve everything to approve it. Which is ridiculous.

We are continuing to work with DPC going into Federal Fiscal Year '08. As our partners, they do a lot of work at the State House. They do a lot of work with emergency preparedness. And we are going to continue that as we move forward. And really, that's just -- that just scratches the edge of all the little things. If anyone has any questions, you don't want to hear me ramble on, please call the SILC office. If you get the answering machine, that is because we are a one-person office. You'll get that a lot of times. And we are out in the field. We are either at an Advocacy Committee Meeting, or meeting of the Advocacy Committee, a meeting that one of the Committee Chairs -- if one of the Committee Chairs can't go, they call me and I fill in. I filled in for Mary Margaret not too long ago. And Joe. So we work together as a team to make things happen.

>>NANCY RUMBOLT-TRCZYZSKI: I told you, as your SILC Chair, next meeting I'm requesting audio raising of your hands, bells, something. I'm going to do it, I swear. It is going to happen. Any old business?

Any new business besides going home?

>>STEVE HIGGINS: Karen Langley?

>>NANCY RUMBOLT-TRCZYZSKI: Oh, you would!

>>KAREN LANGLEY: Well, Nancy, maybe I'm not going to say what I was going to say. I was going to thank the SILC for their present last night, and for the kind words. You know, over the years as Steve said, there is -- there is always not the closest relationship between ILCs and what they call their VR agency, but we have tried to be more than just the VR agency.

For most of you who know, the new Commissioner at MRC is Charles Carr, who also happens to be my husband of 30 years. And as a result of his taking this position, it puts us into a conflict of interest, so -- and for the greater good of the Disability Community, I agreed that Charlie would take that job and I'll move onto another. So I will be moving on, probably within the next two or three months to a position at EOHHS. I will still be working on Assistive Technology, which is my great love. So I will be working on the Community First activities. And for those who know what Community First is, it is really an opportunity for the Commonwealth to keep people in the community, and keep them out of nursing homes, and prevent them from going in. It is something that we have been doing at the Commission for the last several years, so it is nothing new to me. And I hope to bring the Independent Living Philosophy with me, up to a place that has maybe not been consumer friendly in the past. I think it is consumer friend -- it is getting more consumer friendly, and I hope to be a part of that.

I want to thank you all, and perhaps by the time you have your next meeting in January, you'll probably have a new representative appointed for MRC, but thank you very much.

>>NANCY RUMBOLT-TRCZYZNI: Speaking on behalf of the SILC, Karen, thank you very much for all of your hard work. It has been a real pleasure working with you for so many years. Thank you very much.

Can I hear a motion to adjourn?

Motion SYBIL FELDMAN:

Second Judy Rodger

NANCY RUMBOLT-TRCZYZNI: All right. All in favor?

>>FROM THE AUDIENCE: Aye. (All Aye.)

>>NANCY RUMBOLT-TRCZYZNI: I'm sure nobody's opposed? Okay. Thanks, everybody, see you in January.

Adjourned at 3:25 p.m.