**NCIL-Housing Listening Session-(Ai-Live to Zoom) (USHENC1502A - Ai-Live Premium)**

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Live Captioning by Ai-Media

JESSICA PODESVA:
Hi, everyone, we will just give it a minute to let folks trickle in. There will be lots of people joining us. This is such a wonderful turnout, to see so many people able to come today.

So, we will just give it a couple of minutes.

OK, it looks like we haveâ€¦

SPEAKER:
This is the sign language interpreter, I was trying to message you. There is no chat available. Could you give me cohost abilities? For the interpreters that need it. Thank you.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Yes, Jenny?

OK, I think we will go ahead and get started. And I just want to make sure, Jenny, is the chat open?

JENNY SICHEL:
It should be. Can people see the chat?

JESSICA PODESVA:
Are people able to message in the chat? Could someone just take a look at that for us. Yes, OK. Great, I just wanted to make sure. OK, let's go ahead and get started.

Thank you all so much for coming today. We ask that everyone mutes themselves, upon entry, just so we have clear audio.

Welcome, to today's Listening Session on a very important topic, for the disability community, housing. My name is Jessica Podesva, I am NCIL's director of advocacy and policy. Before we go too far, I will turn it over to our operations director, Jenny Sichel, will go over some technology and housekeeping, and accessibility points for today's meeting.

JENNY SICHEL:
Hello everybody, my name is Jenny Sichel, I am a white female with brown hair pulled back into a bun. I am wearing a maroon-ish sweater with a plaid orange scarf, and my background is cherry blossom trees, because it is winter in Boston. And I want to be happy.

Soâ€¦ Let's get into a few housekeeping details. Captions are available on this webinar. You can click 'show subtitle' to turn them on. We also have captions running at Ai-Media. The link is a little too long to read, but we will share it in the chat box. If you go to Ai-Media, it will allow you to enlarge the font, change the color, and contrast of the captioning.

ASL Interpreter's are also present today, and should always be visible. You are presenting in gal review, and they are spotlight. If you cannot see the ASL Interpreter's, please let us know in the chat.

The chat is turned on, but also know that we have a nondiscrimination policy. If any disruptive content is posted in the chat, you will be immediately ejected and not allowed to return.

We will also be answering a bunch of questions. If you have questions, please put them in the chest, or into the Q&A box in this meeting, which I believe we have a Q&A box.

You can also email your questions to me at Jenny@ncil.org or if you are on the telephone, you can press \*9 to indicate you have a question. When we select you, you can push \*6 to unmute yourself.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Just a clarification, Jenny, because this is a listening session we do not have a Q&A box.

JENNY SICHEL:
OK, beautiful. If you do have a question, please raise your hand, your Zoom hand, and we will pick on you to voice your question. Or you can put it into the chat. Does that work, Jessica?

Beautiful, love it, we got this!

Finally, there will be a recording for this session, it will only be made available to NCIL members. If you have any questions please reach out to my email, which is Jenny@ncil.org. Thanks all, and let's have a great session.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you Jenny, and thank you to Mary-Kate as well for running our tech behind the scenes.

Just a visual description of myself, I am a white thirtysomething woman, with long brown hair, wearing glasses and a black sweater. Welcome again, we know that finding affordable and accessible housing is one of the biggest barriers for independence to persons with disabilities. The purpose of today's session is to inform where NCIL's Housing Subcommittee should form their efforts. And identify issues within states.

Because of this, and because we want to hear from many of you as possible, we will be unable to address or provide advice on individual housing cases at this event. However, if you do have any questions on this topic, please do not hesitate to reach out either to myself, Jessica@ncil.org and I will do my best to connect you with the proper person who can address your housing issue, or help provided technical assistance on that question.

Towards the end of today's meeting, I will also ask Mary-Kate to say a few things about some of the -- program opportunities she has going on in the housing space that might be helpful.

This Listening Session is open to the public, and will be recorded. As Jenny said, the recording will be available to NCIL members to watch. If for any one who is not able to attend today's session, and if you have any questions about becoming a NCIL member, please contact our membership coordinator at Denise at ncil.org. And we will put her information in the chat.

For those of you who may be joining us for the first time at an NCIL event, the National Council on Independent Living is the longest running national grassroots organization run by and for people with disabilities. Founded in 1982, NCIL presents hundreds of organizations and individuals, including individuals with disabilities, Centers for Independent Living, State Independent iving councils, and other organizations that advocateâ€¦

SPEAKER:
Jessica, this is the sign language interpreter. If you could just slow down a little bit. That would be great.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Sure. For those of you who may be first time joiners of an NCIL event, the National Council on Independent Living is the longest running national, cross disability, grassroots organization run by and for people with disabilities.

Founded in 1982, NCIL represents hundreds of organizations and individuals, including individuals with disabilities, Centers for Independent Living, State Independent Living councils, and other organizations that advocate for the human and civil rights with People with Disabilites in the United States.

Under our advocacy and public policy committee, we have a Housing Subcommittee who works on advocacy issues related to housing. I will go ahead and turn it over to our house in Co-Chairs Gloria Garton, and Debie Fidler, to tell you a little bit about the Housing Subcommittee. Then we will start the feedback portion of today's event. Gloria and Debbie, take it away.

GLORIA GARTON:
Hi, everyone, I name is Gloria Garton. I am a white female, in my 50sâ€¦ (Laughs) And I am wearing glasses, and had a pink sweater on. Long before I became a cochair of the Housing Subcommittee, I was participating as an active member of the community.

I learned so much from my peers, who had been doing this a lot longer than I had read at that point, when I started working for a Center for Indepedent Living, I was with the North Carolina state wide living counsel, and obviously housing is going to be very much a part of our State Plan for Independent Living.

Our Housing Subcommittee meets once a month. We try to address a lot of issues, that is why this session today is so very important. Because, we cannot possibly address all of them.

I could not do this work of the committee, without my wonderful Co-Chair, Debie Fidler. And I will let Debbie introduce herself.

DEBIE FIDLER:
Hi, my name is Debie Fidler, I am a white female, 54 years old, I have long brown-long hair, and I am wearing a navy sweater. I have worked for a Center for Indepedent Living for a little over 20 years. I have seen working at a center how important housing issues are.

I have also seen some of the innovative things that centers have done to try to address this issue. And so, it has really been important to be involved in the Housing Subcommittee, to get actionable items to happen. To see change happen, that we can share, and help others.

So, this is a great Listening Session today, so we can kind of see what is going on out there. What do people need help with? What can we work on to help centers and statewide independent living councils.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you so much Gloria and Debbie. Without further ado, I want to go ahead and kick off the feedback portion of today's event. So, we have quite a few participants today, which is very exciting.

And we want to hear from as many of you as possible. So, in order to make sure that as many people as possible have the chance to speak, we are going to ask that folks keep their comments to around two minutes. If you need an accommodation to this request, please send a message to Jenny in the chat. Her name is Jenny Sichel, or send her an email at Jenny@ncil.org.

To call on folks and make sure we have clear accessibility, we ask that you only speak once we have identified you, and spotlit you for our interpreters. And we ask that only one person speak at a time.

To do this we will use the hand race feature, if you look at the bottom of your screen you will see a button called 'Raise hand'. And Jenny, it is \*9 on the phone?

JENNY SICHEL:
\*9 to raise her hands, \*6 to unmute.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Excellent, we will call on folks in the order they raise their hand. As a reminder, we are here to listen to folks, we will be unable to answer questions. But please reach out if we can help you with questions or connected to resources after today's session.

So we will go ahead and kick things off. We want to hear everything, and how it is going. So, if you have a comment you would like to give please go ahead and raise your hand to kick things off.

My first questions is: what barriers do you or your consumers face when it comes to finding housing? But this could be on anything. We are accepting all comments.

OK, we have our first hand raised. Janet.

SPEAKER:
Hi, I am participating as a parent of a young adult on the autism spectrum will relies on an SSI check. He is a single placement in supported living, and there is no place in our state where an SSI check can rend him an apartment, or condo, orâ€¦ Duplex, or anything.

And yet, then we get in trouble with the Social Security Administration if we try to help him with his rent. And so, this is a huge barrier. We live in one of the wealthiest counties in the country. And we want to have him near us. Because he is not able to communicate by FaceTime, and that sort of thing.

We need to be able to be present with him, to see and know how he is doing. But yes, there is no affordable place. Soâ€¦ I do not know how to best do it. We cannot control rent, and the SSI check does not seem to be â€“ our state does not supplement the SSI check. So there is no additional funding.

Not only is he being priced out of housing, but others who actually have roommates that are in our supported living situations, throughout Medicaid waivers, even two and three of them living together, or having difficulty finding places to rent them and provider agencies are hurting as well.

Is there anything else you need to know?

JESSICA PODESVA:
Where do you live?

SPEAKER:
I live in Tennessee. Just south of Nashville... The University Center for excellence and development disabilities. My role today is as apparent trying to find a way to get affordable housing for our son.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you so much for your comment Janet.

Next, Scott Crawford?

SPEAKER:
Hi everybody I am Scott Crawford and I live in Jackson Mississippi. I am on the board of the Mississippi coalition for citizens with disabilities. I live with progressive MS, I use a power wheelchair for mobility.

Yes, there are many many obstacles here in Mississippi to finding accessible and affordable housing. I get calls all the time from people struggling to live in the communities of their choice. There just are not any wheelchair accessible units.

And the few that we do have are in very segregated buildings.â€¦ Keeping with our philosophy of integration. Anyway bottom line is, we need to increase the number of fully wheelchair accessible units, meaning role in showers, fully accessible kitchens where you can wheel under the sink etc. and wider doorways.

And go beyond the minimum number of those. Because I can vouch here in Mississippi, we have 18% of our population have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. 18%. That is just Mississippi.

We need to go way beyond the minimum number of units and I agree wholeheartedly that some kind of subsidies or rent controls are going to be necessary. The obvious place to put these units, is in urban, downtown areas that have accessible sidewalks. And of course that means the rents are going to be higher.

I do not know how to accomplish this goal without some kind of rent controls. Thank you.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much Scott.

Next Eva? When folks introduce yourself if you could say where you are calling us from and also if you work for Center for Independent living or estate Independent living Council, or you are a consumer of estate are Independent living Council I would love to know that.

Eva wine bush?

We cannot hear you.

SPEAKER:
Can you hear me now? I apologize about that.

Hi everybody, thank you my name is Eva Winbush. I work for the Center for individuals with disabilities serving (unknown term) county in California.

The struggles I face with my consumers comes of course yes most of the units are not ADA approved or available. All of them want, no exception, first floor units. No elevators or some kind of program that will signal that there is a person and attention to them to help them in those moments.

The second thing I am struggling with is with people who have mental disabilities. They need a lot of support, any type of support possible. The third part is when people do not know about the programs. I get a lot of people referred to me and you they do not even know about housing and all of the different programs existing.

They do not know that we have grants for house modifications. People in general, are not informed. Maybe some more spreading of the word? In hospitals for example, clinics. Any libraries as well about the programs that we offer. They seem always to be surprised.

It takes a long time when I work with people with mental disabilities to even fill out an intake form. It would be nice, I know some Centers have it, may be to have the intake form to be filled out by social worker may be?

Or, I know that you have a great explanation in videos. The more visual explanations about housing, the better. To be to the standards of (indiscernible) with mental disabilities.

SPEAKER:
You are at two minutes.

SPEAKER:
I appreciate that.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you Mary Kate, she has the worst job of the event.

SPEAKER:
Thank you I appreciate you.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you Eva. If we do not have time when it is your turn, you can always follow up with me in writing jessica@ncil.org to submit additional comments you might have time to say today.

Next up is Jennifer Wu.

SPEAKER:
Can you hear me my name is Jennifer and I am from South Carolina. Relocated to South Carolina (indiscernible) upstate. I collected data from our INR and Independent Living teams about experience so I was going to go through the list.

The first one is a fiction history that is pretty serious for consumers. We find that that can be barriers, if you have a fiction history. Folks with bad credit and result of poverty or do not have any credit also are facing barriers finding housing. Folks exiting incarceration and trying to transfer into state housing as well. Lack of accessible options for housing and what we define as typical everyday neighbourhoods. Which I think Scott was mentioning, for their community as well.

And for many people, certain apartment complexes in South Carolina are then only for people with disabilities. That segregation as well. Lack of accessible housing also on transportation lines and having that access to public transportation as needed. Lack of accessibility overall. And that can be on commonplaces, like mentioned before when they define accessibility it is not actually accessibility for people as well. It is not just me and grab bars.

Barriers also regarding service animals and lack of understanding of those rights. There is not enough housing allocated for people with disabilities under the law which is also a problem. That is the list that we have, thank you.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much Jennifer. Next, Colin.

SPEAKER:
I live in Californiaâ€¦ The big issues are affordable, housing. In California it is extremely... We have extremely high rents and extremely high cost of living. All the consumers who are on government checks almost all goes to rent. It is also very (indiscernible) housingâ€¦ Barriers to disabilities. It is also tough to recount as a consumer that is homeless even if they have mental history.

We had a consumer who it took me a year to find him a place to live... When he was homeless. Lack of affordable and accessible housing that has connections to (indiscernible) and public, pedestrian networks. That is all, thank you.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much:. Next is Jordan Stocker?

I am sorry Jordan, I just mispronounce your name wrong.

SPEAKER:
You got it right. It is like stock market. I work as the IL housing project coordinator in Massachusetts. I worked statewide with the Independent Living Centers and the statewide Independent living Council on housing issues.

I think one thing that Eva touched on but I wanted to capture a little bit more, the housing search process were folks is a really big challenge and there is not enough intrinsic partnerships whether it be housing authorities or other housing agencies. Whether it is by lack of capacity or initiative on the Housing Authority parts.

I think that is something that we can build towards, something that we are building towards here. Trying to build stronger connections with housing authorities so they are able to take on this challenge a little bit more when it comes to housing search and tenancy support. And also providing documents in plain language so people know where they stand with the housing application process. And they are able to make better decisions about their housing options.

Thank you.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you Jordan.

Next Pamela Torres?

SPEAKER:
Travis is just going to pin Pamela. Can you see Pamela?

JESSICA PODESVA:
She is spot lit.

SPEAKER:
We just want to make sure we can hear Travis.

Pamela says Travis can you see her alright? I cannot hear you.

Pamela said just go for it. I got it. Travis just backed me up if you can. Hi everybody, I am ready. So sorry, please do not count that as Pamela's time.

Can everyone hear the interpreter ok?

JESSICA PODESVA:
We can in the timer will start now.

SPEAKER:
It did not start yet. Ready?

This is Pamela. I want to introduce myself first, my name is Pamela. I am a death lead service advocate to be specific and I am from Cincinnati. -- deaf

There is a lot of accessible barriers and issues that we really need to work on. We also provide housing services for the deaf and hard of hearing in Orange County specifically, in California.

With that said I recently started housing services last year and I noticed such huge barriers. In a condensed version let me try to get this out. I do see some programs out there regarding housing that do have some accessibility in their home already set up. But with that said, specifically for deaf and hard of hearing have not seen one thing at all.

In California they have only one location. It is a senior citizens (indiscernible) but in Orange County there is not one thing that is accessible for deaf individuals. We need to set housing for specifically deaf and hard of hearing individuals. You have a million deaf and hard of hearing individuals in California so we need at least one.

The reason is there is a huge deaf community in Orange County. We have a deaf school K-12 so I need to establish a lot of things. The other thing is social, and society.

SPEAKER:
Social Security.

SPEAKER:
There is a conflict of interest, you have to put down a deposit, you need to have a savings. You can only have so much income and honestly for deaf individuals we really want to encourage people. There is such a struggle there! We have a bill that needs to become a long. We have been waiting a long time for this to happen.

I do have some notes here. The third thing is there is no deaf and hard of hearing senior citizens for assisted living. None in Orange County. In the southern part of California, there is not one assisted living for deaf individuals. There are other areas that you have it...

Another thing that weâ€¦ We need for sobriety housing. For deaf people. 10 years ago it shut down and now we have nothing for our members, for sober living for deaf and hard of hearing people.

There is not a lot of mental health services for deaf individuals with direct services and temporary housing interim.

MARY-KATE WELLS:
Just flooding time. -- Flagging the time.

JESSICA PODESVA:
We will give one more minute for interpreting.

SPEAKER:
The last thing I want to spotlight, for the interim housing specifically, they do not have any accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing people. It is amazing that they do not.

They really need to be able to interact with a deaf person in the first line which, American Sign Language, which deaf people are neglected and ignored. They are marginalized. Those individuals have to go throughâ€¦

They have to push through the system, they are just neglected. And so, I feel pretty good with my comments now. So I will turn it back over. Thank you for listening.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you, Pamela. Next, we have Jeffrey Williams.

SPEAKER:
Hello everybody, my name is Jeff Williams,

JESSICA PODESVA:

Sorry, we just had to spotlight you.

SPEAKER:
I am Jeff Williams, the director for EOCIL - five years ago we started providing housing services for individuals with mental health, addiction, individuals with disabilities, HIV, and people coming out of the correctional system.

We noticed five years ago, definitely not enough housing and it has gotten worse over the years. It is not just an Oregon thing, it is all over the US. We have purchased 19 units that we provide to anyone fitting the criteria that I mentioned.

Our program for each individual, lasts for 1-2 years. In that time period we help them either get on section A or subsidized housing. Get or have income, when they finish the program.

So they are able to sustain their rent.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Sorry, Jeffrey, we just have got a notice in the chat that we might have lost cart.

JENNY SICHEL:
I still see it going.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Folks, give us a thumbs up if cart is still working. It is working on my end. Can someone follow-up? Thank you. I just wanted to make sure we had universal access. Go ahead, Jeffrey.

MARY-KATE WELLS:
I stopped your time, Jeffrey Privette so you are still good.

SPEAKER:
That is OK. Eastern Oregon, we are in frontier, rural areas, we definitely have accessibility issues. We do have set aside accessibility units that we have. We do not have enough, definitely. But it is a start.

We are looking at building our housing program. But, you knowâ€¦ It comes down to funding, definitely. Andâ€¦ So that is whatâ€¦

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you so much Jeff, sorry again for the interruption. Next we have, Kwanesha Clark. If I pronounce your name wrong, please tell me the pronunciation.

SPEAKER:
No, you got it correct. One of the concerns I have for housing, by the way, I am an independent living specialist with liberty resources. Representing the counties of Philadelphia, Chester, Montgomery, Delaware, in Delaware Counties.

One of the biggest issues I noticed with housing is that, we have a lot of consumers that are facing homelessness. And do not want to go into the shelter system. Here in Philadelphia, particularly, because some shelters do not address their daily needs, as far as their community-based services disappear when they go into a shelter system.

And they worry about their safety, more so, because there is nothing in the shelters that address their physical needs. So, I have been looking for a Transitional Housing that takes on consumers that do not want to go into the shelter system.

But a lot of our referrals have to come through the office of homeless services.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you so much for your comments. Next we have a phone numberâ€¦ It is, the last four digits are 0371. You can dial \*6 to unmute. I prompted you as well. 0371â€¦

SPEAKER:
Hello, I am from the Navajo reservation here in Arizona. I am also part of a group called northern Arizona troubled disability coalition.

But the reservation is dealing with is lack of housing for people with disabilities from the ages of 18-50. There is hardly any housing, and there is only a percentage, 5% for disability that can apply for housing.

It is 10-15 years waiting list to get help on the reservation. So, that is just what I have to say. It would be nice to have more housing on the reservation for people with disabilities.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much. Next we have Ria.

SPEAKER:
Hi everyone, my name is Ria and the supervising the -- supervising attorney, we are a low income advocate on behalf of low income utility consumers. We advocate so that these consumers can connect to and maintain utility services.

And throughout the state of Pennsylvania we are seeing great issues to utility debt. And utility unaffordability, causing barriers to establishing housing, and establishing stable housing. A few examples, utility that can pose a barrier for people seeking to reconnect to services after they move, trying to establish housing.

This might also stand as a barrier to accessing public housing. In addition to that, the overall affordability of utility services can pose a barrier to access housing, and find housing. For example, depending on where you are in Pennsylvania, there might be more or less affordable utility services.

It might cause some individuals to be priced out of certain areas. They cannot afford to keep up with the cost of potentially high utilities in their area. Numerous other examples, we are happy to discuss that, if there is a need in a different form as well. Thank you.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much, Ria. Next, Brian, did I get your last name right?

SPEAKER:
You did, thank you.

JESSICA PODESVA:
I am doing well today, alrightâ€¦ (Laughs)

SPEAKER:
Good afternoon, I am the executive director of a nonprofit that serves young adults with learning and disability, and a number of the Alabama SILCs.

One of the challenges that we see is a movement to congregate housing Inc. sold to out-of-state landowners. And they are closing or ending on-site management. It makes it really challenging for us to advocate for consumers.

For consumers to tour and select the most suitable units. It is hard even to get a rental person to return your phone call. They want everything to be done online. Just select the unit and moving. It is ridiculous.

As was mentioned before, lease terms that are super complex, without plain language, and with no one to help interpret and understand them. Leases that go on for 30-40 pages with legalese, very difficult for young adults, or adults with learning disabilities.

Challenges also related to a state land owners, and less attention to local communities, is very limited maintenance or support when something does go awry in a unit. Trying to find someone that will respond when there is a repair, we have had toilets overflowing, ceiling leaks, windows broken, all after the tenants occupied and it is days or weeks before they get a response from maintenance.

I think that could be a bias sometimes against people with disabilities. As was mentioned before, we see limited leasing options at affordable rates. Particularly someone who is at fixed income, they might receive an entitlement, or they may be working, but working at an entry-level wage exude difficult when all of us are quite aware of what is happening in our states.

I know in our community, I think the average cost for a one-bedroom somewhere around $1500. And that is a lot of money for most of our consumers.

Accessibility is certainly a concern. Accessibility in terms of those with ability impairments, but also challenges with accessibility based on public transit accessibility. The more affordable units are further away from the transit lines.

Even when we try to access the special services that the city provides, through federal funding, their routes are quite limited. They are still limited to within essay 1 mile of an established transit line. It makes it hard.

MARY-KATE WELLS:
Just wrapping up your comments, thank you.

SPEAKER:
Yes, I will. The new thing that has come up is accepting the tenants to accept some of the cost of the managements liability. Not talking about renters insurance, they are adding onto the leases the cost of the property insurance to the landlord, and the ticket can take it or leave it but not refused to pay. Finally, the limited options of housing for displaced consumers. They may be displaced from a family home due to illness, or job loss, there is not a lot of quick affordable temporary housing. Thank you.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much, Brian. Next we have Paul.

SPEAKER:
can you hear me? My name is Paul, I work with disability network Southwest Michigan, ADA specialist and systems advocate. We have been working with our state Housing Authority, Michigan state housing development Authority, to be able to get more accessible units.

They primarily work with the low income housing tax credits, which developers compete for. And they actually modified the scoring system for that, which is called the qualified allocation plan, to include points for putting in more type a dwelling units. Which is 1103 in the ANC codebook, which developers work with and the architects.

What is mandated by the fair housing act is a type B, which has blocking in the walls for grab bar installation, and me and toe clearance underneath the sink so you can actually do a forward approach. The kicker is that type B lacks maneuvering space. We have been working to get type a instead of type B units built, so you have greater maneuvering space, and more freedom instead of feeling trapped, all you can do is go backwards or forwards, you cannot turn around in type B units.

Argue for type A 1103 which has the manoeuvring space and can be readily adapted instead of trying to tear all bathroom walls put into blocking and rebuilding. It is readily adaptable. That is a lot of details for short period of time (Laughs)

It is more grounded in trying to argue for universal design, which is basically seven concepts and not tangible for someone to build with. You need something that is detailed, like the building code in ANC, accessible usable buildings and facilities codebook.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much Paul.

Next we have Morgan Hugo?

SPEAKER:
I work at levity resources as a senior (indiscernible) specialist. Some of the issues we have experienced are individuals with criminal records, not being able to get housing vouchers or housing units. The other issues that we have also been experiencing is the lack of accessible housing.

Sorry my dog is barking.

For those with (indiscernible) voucher it is easy to find housingâ€¦ Not easy to find safe and affordable and accessible housing for those with disabilities.

Those individuals keep extending their housing choice to the last possible minute.

The other thing as well is, when people pay for their security deposits to move in with (indiscernible) vouchers because it is 1/3 of the rent. Thank you very much and apologize for the barking dog.

JESSICA PODESVA:
We are very dog friendly at NCIL so no need to apologize.

Next up the four digits of the phone are 7673.

I do want to preface we are coming up on 2:50 PM so we are going to try to get through as many people as possible, but we will have to wrap up at 2:55 PM.

7673?

SPEAKER:
Hi this is Doris Ray. I work at the independent Center of Northern Virginia. We serve three counties and three independent cities which are jurisdictions at the level of the County. In our service area which include 1.4 million people.

I have been working with and our Center has been working with the housing authorities and the housing departments in our jurisdiction for more than 14 years. Particularly, it was spurred by a program on housing advocacy's target from - with a grant from (unknown term) that some years ago and we have continued on.

That is an important thing that Independent Living can do. I think CIL and associated organizations need education on the housing administration and structure in their states and localities. It is very complex. We have used the low income housing tax credit to get more, successfully get more type letter a units and it is a very good program.

It requires when you are using competitive (indiscernible) in our state, when you are using 9% tax credits which are competitive and more desirable by the builders that you include 10% of the units that are type A.

Related to that however nationally, I think that we should be pursuing requirements in all states under building codes. I do not know if it can be required at the national level, but we should investigate that. Certainly going to state legislatures and requiring that 10% of all units in newly built, multifamily residential structures be fully accessible. Have 10% of the units that are fully accessible, type A.

SPEAKER:
â€¦

SPEAKER:
Yes I need to wrap up right?

I think we should be pursuing that. I echo the other sentiments here. But if we were to pursue getting building codes changed, number one, it would be enforceable. Which is important. And number two, we will not be facing, at least not as much of a lack of accessible housing as we are now. Because even after so many years the housing act was enacted, we just only have less than 1% of housing that is fully accessible.

And the last thing I want to mention that is a high priority is from HUT there will be a fair housing initiative equity initiative that will add significantly to the enforceability of consolidated plans and jurisdictions. We need to learn about it and be using it across the United States. Thank you for this opportunity to make comments -- HUD

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you next up we have Tammy?

SPEAKER:
I am Tammy Hartman and I work in northeastern Ohio. We work with four counties, Ashtabula, Trumbull, Mahoning and Columbiana. I am contracted through the choice home program. We still do the home choice for individuals in the nursing facilities. Our ILS specialist are finding that we are obtaining consumers, they are coming in that are homeless. They have disabilities and are living in tent cities.

We are connecting and sending them over to different agencies that have grants, like Catholic charities. There is quite a few that we can send them over to in our different counties depending on what counties they have those grants unfortunately deplete very quickly though because of the lack of income for these individuals.

We found is well with the home choice program that a lot of the housing authorities we work with, do not have the maintenance people to do the fixing of the units to get them ready for the next person to come in. We have waited months for maintenance to come in because they are having a hard time finding individuals who want to work.

I agree with everything everyone has said. It is the wait lists, the income and I do not know if it has already been said but, with homelessness if someone is homeless they go up to the top of the list. They are the next one, they moved all the way up to first. The individuals that are on the waitlist are curious, "why am I going back to 120 when I was just in 110?"

It is a struggle for everyone and thank you for my time.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you Tammy. We have two people left with her hands raised so I think we will go ahead with Eric and then Minerva and we will wrap up.

Eric?

SPEAKER:
Can everybody hear me?

JESSICA PODESVA:
Go ahead.

SPEAKER:
I will try to make this less than a minute if I can. First I want to piggyback off of my colleagues comments about our stay in Kentucky. That is trying to pass a law to make it illegal for cities or counties around the state to allow various forms of income, i.e. vouchers etc., To be used. They are trying to make it so that they have the say so over how a person pays for their rent. Whether it is voucher or cash or whatever.

This is something that I think should have been covered in the ADA and if not it should be made federal. Where a person's way of paying for their rent should not be limited to whatever the state or whomever dictates it should be.

My other thing is I wrote in the chat in case anybody was interested, I run into a policy through HUD what we call mainstream vouchers here for people with disabilities, having an age limit. I have people over the age of 62 who are disabled and will be till the day they die, that need housing. Because of that they have to go through the mainstream - not the mainstream but section 8 which is a larger waiting list. More people on it. And it seems to me like that policy, which it is a policy, so HUD should be able to change it, should not have a limit on age for a person who has a disability.

There is my two cents worth and I appreciate being a part of this group. I am with the independence place and a housing advocate in Kentucky.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much Eric, we appreciate you coming.

Last but certainly not least Minerva and then we will go ahead and wrap up today session.

SPEAKER:
My name is Minerva and I am with the Independent Living Center in southern Nevada for Independent Living. We cover the whole area of Clark County.

We have a lot of barriers, it is very transient when it comes to housing, affordability, accessibility. All areas. We have also partnered up with the HUD, housing program in southern Nevada for referrals for the mainstream housing program. But we have encountered all kinds of barriers with them, as well as with our consumers regarding submitting referral process, helping them get the identifiers. Even though to submit the referrals they have to have IDs, Social Security and so much paperwork. We cannot sometimes even get them on the list.

One of the things we encountered is, even with all of that being said, accessibility is also an issue and also there is an age requirement, 18 prior to 62.

It is tough out there.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much Minerva. Thank you everyone for attending today's event. I cannot believe we had so many people turn out for this. This is not going to be the only one that we do. We will be doing other listening sessions like this on other topics, so please be on the lookout for those alerts from NCIL.

Really quickly before you wrap up I want to call in our program structure Mary Kay to plug a few housing -related programming events that we have coming up. Mary Kay?

SPEAKER:
Hi everyone.

I just put in the chat a link through NCIL peer network. It is a monthly peer network calling him home usability and other housing issues and to help sales build their capacity to address these housing issues. Our next meeting is March 13 and we will be talking about funding opportunities for home modification.

I put the link in the chat, so if you have any more questions please feel free to reach out.

JESSICA PODESVA:
Thank you very much Mary Kate. I also wanted to make sure we did a quick plug on that. Thank you all for coming. As a reminder we will have a recording, this event recording will be available in our member Center for NCIL members. If you work for a Center for Independent living who is an organizational member of NCIL you do have access to NCIL as an associate member and our member Center. If you are not signed up for that please reach out to our membership coordinator who can help walk you through that process.

We appreciate you all so much for coming today and the comments really will help. I heard comments that really support a number of our advocacy initiatives such as the SSI asset limits and a number of other things. It really touches on so many other issues, not just housing but it is clear that one is very much influencing the other.

Thank you all so much this really will help when we go have meetings with legislatures at the federal level. We appreciate you all for taking the time to come today.

Thank you and without further ado we will close today's event. Thank you all so much.

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