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11:00 COUNCIL MEETING & QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING

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 >> Good morning. All right. What time do we have? Annette, can you hear us?
 >> Robin: All right. Well, thank you all for being here. It's great to see everybody for this so ‑‑ quarterly business meeting on Friday, May 12th. So I will call this meeting to order by banging my gavel very carefully not to smack anyone. Okay. There we go. All right. Well, I am happy to see all of your faces and I think that we should go around the room today, and just do intros and say your name and ‑‑ so we all know who is here. So I will start with myself. I'm Robin Bennett, chair of the council, and we will go to my left, Lisa.
 >> Lisa: I am Lisa Cook‑Gordon. I am the co‑chair, as well as the executive board. I was appointed with children with special needs and services.
 >> I am Kevin Green. I am not a board member but I'm representing Michigan Rehabilitation Services.
 >> Alex: Oh. I'm Alex Darr. I'm a council member.
 >> Aaron: Aaron Andres. Council member.
 >> Jim: Jim Whalen. Director, representative, council member.
 >> Lisa: I am Lisa Keisel. I am with the Bureau of Services for Bind Persons, and I am representing the BSBP today.
 >> I am Warner and I am a council member.
 >> Gabriella: I am Gabriella Bauman and I am glad to be here.
 >> Robbins. Coordinator of staff.
 >> Rodney: I am Rodney Craig. I'm staff to the council.
 >> Robin: People in the back of the room?
 >> Staff to the Michigan council to rehabilitation services.
 >> Tracy Brown. Staff to the council.
 >> I am Terri Warner.
 >> I know how that goes. My bride is out in the parking lot catching some rays.

 (Laughter)
 >> Robin: So all right. So let's do roll call. On the phone? And do we have anyone on the phone who would like to introduce themselves? Thank you for that.
 >> Hi. This is Payten. Council member.
 >> Robin: Anyone else on the phone?
 >> Joe Harcz. Citizen advocate.
 >> Robin: All right. Thank you all for being here. Is that all we have on the phone?
 >> There's two others but one is the CART operator.
 >> Robin: Okay. All right. So we will move on to roll call. Aaron Andres?
 >> Present.
 >> Robin: Gabriella Bauman?

 >> Present.

 >> Robin: Lisa Cook‑Gordon?
 >> Present.
 >> Robin: Sara Grivetti?
 >> Present.
 >> Robin: Kelsey Kleimola, who's been excused. Rebecca?
 >> Present.
 >> Robin: Lorraine Warner?
 >> Present.
 >> Robin: Jim Whalen?
 >> Present.
 >> You have the chair.
 >> All right. Awesome. Let's first look to approving the ‑‑ the ‑‑ the business meeting agenda for today. Does everybody have that draft agenda available? Are there any changes that need to be made to this agenda for today?
 >> Sara: I move to approve the agenda as written. This is Sara.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Sara. And you second?
 >> I second. Lisa‑cook Gordon.
 >> All in favor of approving the agenda for May 12, say I.
 >> I.
 >> Awesome. That is approved. All right. Next, we will approve the February 10th, 2017, draft quarterly business meeting minutes. I believe those are in our packet. So I need a motion to approve and put on file those minutes.
 >> Motion to approve. Aaron Andres.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Aaron. Second?
 >> Second.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Alex. All right. All those in favor ‑‑
 >> Sara: Discussion?
 >> Robin: Thank you, Sara. Watch out for me.
 >> Sara: I am watching out for you. There was one, Kelsey's name was incorrectly spelled in the minutes.
 >> Oh, that's nice of you.
 >> Robin: Thank ‑‑ thank you for reminding me of rules. I appreciate that.
 >> Sara: You're welcome.
 >> Robin: Is there any more discussion on that? All right. Carrying on, we will go ahead and go ahead and vote on approving those quarterly business meeting minutes. All those in favor, say I.
 (Simultaneously saying “I”)
 >> Robin: All right. Those are approved. It looks like next we have our reports from ‑‑ they're in our packets, as well as I know we have some representatives in the room. So why don't we go ahead and go to the Michigan Rehabilitation Services report first?
 >> I'm sorry but I do not have Suzanne's report, and I am waiting for it. So ‑‑
 >> Robin: Okay.
 >> Could we possibly go to it at a later date in the meeting? Okay.
 >> Robin: Yeah. We'll do the other reports first and then if you are ready, we'll go. If not, we postpone.
 >> Thank you.
 >> Robin: All right. Would you like to go? BSBP.
 >> Leamon Jones has joined us as well.
 >> Robin: Good to see you, Leamon.
 >> As I said, Bill's not here today so you have Leamon and I to follow up. At this point, BSBP is, you know, still continuing to implement the changes as a result of CIOA. We are updating policies. We are actually working on a memorandum with the Michigan department of education. We've done a draft copy, if you will. But we're actually vetting through our technical assistance center and working with agency and rehab services and looking at their draft also. And ‑‑ so we're working on those particular items. We are also partnering with MRS on their policy ‑‑ on policies. They call it a CADRE. We don't quite have a CADRE. No, we do. Not quite as large but ‑‑ so we're working on those things. We are being ‑‑ as ‑‑ as a result of these CSAVI, which is the council for state agencies for VR ‑‑ VR agencies in Maryland in April. It was announced from the podium that Michigan will be in the next round of monitoring reviews by the rehab services administration. So we all kind of looked at each other and said did you know that? Because I didn't know that.

 (Laughter)
 >> Robin: So that was probably Joe. Thanks for that. Yeah. And the ‑‑ the next comment was there will be a letter in the mail. Okay then. So we are looking and reviewing that monitor review guide and, you know, strategically playing on who is going to ‑‑ how we are going to address all the different questions that need to be answered in the information that we'll be asked to provide. We are actively promoting free employment transition services within all of our offices and all of our consumers. We have about 290 pre‑employment transition service recipients, if you will. Also, students who are within the age of 14 to 26 receiving educational services. So we are actively promoting those programs. We have inner agency cash transfer agreements and agreements in Kent, Muskegon, Ottawa, Ingham, Macomb Counties, and we are looking for others for those types of agreement. We are actually working with low incidents outreach and teacher consultants for the visually impaired to help basically build an understanding, if you will, about WIOA and pre‑employment transitions and the roles the schools would be in terms of helping to promote that program. I am happy to say that our technology, our ‑‑ what we call our electronic file management system has ability to open consumer prior to application without a Social Security number is, in fact, up and running with a unique identifier. So that's a huge thing for us because as most of us know, VR as a culture has always opened cases using an SSN and now we're able to do that prior to application, which is ‑‑ for kids who are not ready to be VR clients just yet. So that's a really good thing.

 We are looking at our processes and strategic planning always in terms to help us to be more effective and more efficient. We are also ‑‑ we also partnered with our sister agency and thank you for that invitation to innovation technical assistance center came and provided training and over view on performance measures. Performance measures are very different from standards and indicators from our framework of operation under many, many decades under RSA have changed so our technical assistance is helping us to understand and embrace and make those new changes part of our existing culture. I told staff and it is kind of my catch phrase these days that we are ‑‑ we are change agents in the midst of systems change.

 As I mentioned before, also coming to Michigan to work with BSBP field staff on June 6th to do a training regarding pre‑employment transition services, reinforcing what we've already been teaching them, and adding a global approach of the different items that are going on around the country, the different, you know, conversations and different things that are happening so that can help our staff to feel ‑‑ there's been so much change and as we know, change is difficult and it's unsettling and, you know, it's ‑‑ it's a very, very different rehab world right now that we're morphing into. So that technical assistance has really been a real help. Not that we have not been giving them information because we have. But to ‑‑ to know that, you know, work with technical assistance centers that are working with RSA in order to help us deliver that ‑‑ that message. We are also looking to promote other additional training for staff, such as the performance measures, bringing that down to the staff level to the field staff, helping them to understand and also looking at the concept of performance appraisal. Because, you know, the standards and indicators that we have measured success by, as I said, are very different. So how we help staff to measure our success as a bureau will be obviously is different too and measuring staff performance will ‑‑ will, you know, mesh into that as well. So we're looking at promoting some technical assistance for that, too. So we're going to have a busy summer. If the letter comes, when the letter comes, they said late spring so that's kind of now. I guess. I mean maybe it could be June 21st. I don't know. I would suggest RSA could be here, at this point, probably late summer. So, you know, and that's a guess. You know, they were ‑‑ they were going to be measuring ‑‑ they were monitoring Maine and Florida and Indiana so we made a few friends while we were there, and I talked to Brenda, who is the ‑‑ the blind agency director and I said I think we need a virtual coffee break after your monitoring outcome meeting with RSA. So definitely doing that too. So BSBP, we're busy. Any questions?
 >> I have a question. Lisa‑Cook‑Gordon. Of the counties you named, I don't reside in one of them so I was just wondering what is your plan for adding new counties on to that?
 >> Robin: You know, we are always looking at new counties to add ‑‑ to design in relation to cash transfer agreement. Some of that has to do with population and incidents. You know? So if we have enough kids who are ready to participate in those programs. But I also want to be clear, that doesn't mean we are not serving those kids in those counties. We're still serving those kids in those counties. It just means we don't have cash match agreements. But certainly, we are serving the kids in those counties. So I can talk with you more about that a little bit more specifically if you want to.
 >> Lisa: Sure because I didn't know if you had others you were looking at doing, you know, bringing on board or anything like that?
 >> Robin: We are looking at potentially with opportunities unlimited for the blind. They do camp so they have ‑‑ we are looking. We're always looking for opportunities to capture nonfederal dollars because that helps us to meet our match. Budget wise this year, we are obviously like a lot of people, we're managing a bit of a ‑‑ of a ‑‑ of a ‑‑ I don't want to say ‑‑ we're not in a crisis but, you know, definitely we need to watch our spending and obviously making sure we meet our match and all of those things. So we're keeping a tight eye on that because we do have to spend that 15% Federal Reserve on pre‑employment transition, which for bureau of services for blind persons is about $2.4 million and change and for MRS, it's about $14 million. So ‑‑ and remember, it's a state ‑‑ it's a state goal. So we're ‑‑ you know, we're obviously working together. We're actually having monthly meetings with MRS senior management to talk about progress and how we're ‑‑ you know, because we need to work together to be successful. Did you have anything that I left out or needed to add?
 >> No, I think you probably covered basically everything I think. The only thing is that the ‑‑ a bit of the program is that's going to be working with VR staff and ‑‑ whatever we possibly can to make that happen. The other thing is we are looking, again as an indicator as our policies and procedures come to fruition, we are ‑‑ we have sent those over for approval. That is, for the independent living program. That's some basic changes in there. But those are as a result of our audit.
 >> Robin: Right.
 >> But it will, you know, enhance and increase our abilities and accountability as well for the program. The other program is our youth visual program. We have a task force and our task force is reviewing the policies and procedures and helped to and will be providing some guidance and directions by mid‑summer as to the steps the youthful program will be taking. So ‑‑ one other thing too is that the other blind program will receive some technical assistance from university and that will be coming this summer, and some of the ‑‑ some of you probably will be called upon as partners for some of that information. That would be what's coming.
 >> Robin: I also just ‑‑ I know, Rodney, you had lunch yesterday with Bill and I think maybe Mike? I'm not sure.
 >> Just Bill.
 >> Robin: Just Bill. I do know the documents either are being signed or have been signed and DSS will be the recipient of the grant and to facilitate ‑‑
 >> And they have been signed.
 >> Robin: I thought that but I wasn't positive when that was happening. So thank you.
 >> I just want a little clarification. When you ‑‑ when you speak of technical assistance, what ‑‑ give me an example of what ‑‑ what that would ‑‑ what that would be.
 >> Robin: RSA, rehab services administration has outlined ‑‑ I believe there are I think three or four different entities that they have granted funds to provide VR agencies with technical assistance as we implement this legislative change.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> Robin: So basically, those entities, because they are a grant recipient from RSA have either ‑‑ I think they meet with them every two weeks. So they are sort of the voice of ‑‑ of the ‑‑ kind of like you're the voice of the consumers, they're the voice of the VR agencies in the country. And they work with us to ‑‑ where are your challenges? Where are you doing well? Where do you have needs? So they work with RSA. They put out technical assistance that could be like FAQs, it could be webinars, it could be lots of publication. Then in our case, they're actually going to come on site and do training with our staff on the implementation of WIOA. It's pre‑employment transition, so they are actually on the ground working directly with agencies. Kind of doing what RSA's not able to do because they're not big enough to do that anymore. We used to have ‑‑ it was what ten regional offices that represented RSA staff? That's no longer. Those have been gone for quite some time, so they've incorporated ‑‑ it used to be ‑‑ you might have heard of TA centers, technical assistance centers for education. Those of us old timers, our set back in the day, you know ‑‑ I'm right there with you ‑‑ where they provide that continuing education. Is that ‑‑ maybe makes more sense?
 >> Yes. Thank you.
 >> Robin: So yeah, it is a great resource because here is the thing. I can write RSA and I can call RSA but they may or may not return my call within a month. But these guys meet with them every two weeks. So it's a good catalyst for, can you ask them this? You know? So that's ‑‑ that's the bonus. We're actually working with two technical ‑‑ actually, three of you, which we should. So we're working with Mississippi State. We are working with WINTAC, and we are also working with VR development group so all those different entities are providing different types ‑‑ for instance, our CR development group provides these really great online learning bits where you can learn all about the history of VR. You know? You know, help you, you know, tool kits for VR counselors and stuff like that.
 >> Awesome.
 >> Robin: Yeah.
 >> Are there any other questions for Leamon or Lisa for BSBP?
 >> Leamon, just a quick question. The use with vision impairments, does that actually have youth on it?
 >> Leamon: Does it have youth on it? It does. It has primarily some staff and VITC and low‑vision practitioners and representatives from the consumer groups.
 >> Sorry. This is Jim Whalen. Isn't that group mostly working on the policy end right now, not the actual program side? Is that what I understand? Or is it developing programming?
 >> It is looking at both the policy and program ‑‑
 >> Because if that's something you would like, I could talk to you afterwards and perhaps help to recruit some youth who actually have received services who have input.
 >> Sure. We ‑‑ we are looking at the survey to look at efficiency and effectiveness of the program.
 >> Thank you.
 >> Robin: All right. Thank you, Lisa and Leamon. All right. We will move on to Jim Whalen with the IL network update.
 >> Jim: Okay. So give you sort of a brief overview of what ‑‑ what the network has been up to over the last quarter. Well, you know, service delivery along with MRS, you know, we're starting to sort of more ‑‑ along with everybody at this table, quite frankly, into the stuff that we're working I think much better from a year ago with MRS and the PRE-ET’s content around the state, I think those are starting to hum versus limp I would say. And I think that's getting itself worked out. I ‑‑ I think in this time of transition, our network has spent ‑‑ gee, Sara, what? Probably half or two‑thirds of our time in the last year working on how we can improve ourselves internally in terms of programming, strategic initiatives, and I think those things are finally coming to a ‑‑ I don't want to say a screeching halt but I think they are coming to some practical steps. One of the things the network is really working on quite frankly is how we become more consistent state‑wide and how we do it different and sometimes better job of training all of our employees so that we ‑‑ we maintain a standard of quality regardless of who we bring on and what programs they're in. And I think, you know, without ‑‑ I ‑‑ I can't let the big cats out of the bag because the directors are going to be voting next week. But we have talked about such concepts as having, you know, an IL academy where all the new staff learn a basic set of competencies. We're working on mandatory ‑‑ mandatory competence in terms of entering data into the database. So we are really working on the quality of ourselves internally. And of course, with all this other stuff changing around us, there ‑‑ there are some challenges but our youth services have increased. I think what we'll be able to show with, you know, such things as dash board, I think you'll start to see a more accurate reflection of what ‑‑ of what we do as a network. I ‑‑ I will just say for the record how dedicated the group of directors have been to this idea that in order to say what we're going to do, do it, and then say what we did. That we've got to become more consistent across ‑‑ across the whole state and really put some serious effort into it, and I think by the next quarterly meeting we'll probably have some fairly exciting things to talk about. What we're ‑‑ what we're doing as a network. Not that these aren't. And I just want to put in a I guess a public plug for our partners at MRS working with us on the PRE-ET stuff because I think some really exciting stuff is starting to pop there. Quite frankly, as our partners from BSBP just were talking about how ‑‑ how some things are beginning, I think we can transfer a lot of that knowledge from one place to another.

 So I think those ‑‑ those are the major things we're starting to look at across the state as opposed to singular sort of centers being more or less, you know, super stars. We all want to be super stars. So I think we're working on ‑‑ on those more than anything as a network. And I don't know, Sara, if you want to add anything to that but that's ‑‑ that's what the centers have been up to. So far, I don't think any of the centers have received that dreaded we're being reviewed letter so ‑‑

 (Laughter)
 >> Well, hopefully we get it ‑‑ we get it before you do. But the way we were told about it from the podium, I have no idea.
 >> It usually comes in an e‑mail. When you found out your house payment check didn't go through and the e‑mail, by the way, we need two pages worth of documents by next Friday, right?
 >> Robin: Jim, thank you for that because I think you captured a lot of those really positive things that are happening. The only other thing I would add to it ‑‑ the only reason I am adding it because Jim was not able to attend this was our legislative day on May 3rd. And we had a number ‑‑ we had all the CILs represented and I think three or four SILC members came and SILC staff, Terri was there. And we had several consumers and board members and the intent of the day is to spend time in one‑on‑one meetings with legislators to share about independent living, talk about independent living program, barriers to living independently and obtaining employment. Then we come together from 11 to 1 ish and all have lunch together, and the unfortunate thing is ‑‑ fortunately, a lot of the CILs have some great meetings with their legislators. The unfortunate thing is the competing events of the day, the ‑‑ the house session running over, and some other issues. We didn't have as high of participation from legislators at the ‑‑ at the luncheon as we normally do. We donated a lot of lunches to a homeless shelter, which is a great use of the lunches that are left over. But it ‑‑ the one‑on‑one meetings is really where the meat's at in our conversations. And, you know, I think that what's important to note is the work that we do with the legislature and with the governor's Administration goes a long way and it furthers all of our causes. Not ‑‑ I mean not ‑‑ when we talk about employment, we don't talk about employment without talking about our partners, BSBP and MRS as critical partners in helping people obtain employment. The lieutenant governor's office has been very engaged with the work that we're doing. I know Robin's going to talk about that a little bit later. But, you know, it's pretty ‑‑ it's pretty nice when the lieutenant governor issue ‑‑ issues a letter to the legislature telling ‑‑ or the appropriations committee telling him what his funding priorities are and independent living is on it. You know, that's pretty exciting. You know? I think that's the first time in my 17 years of being around that ever seen something like that. So it ‑‑ being a resource to your legislators has been a real key for us to build those relationships. So that was all I had to add to it.
 >> And I would jump right on top of that, that end comment. That all of us as council members, when we get the chance to talk with our representatives or their staff, we ‑‑ we have a lot of expertise in this room. Be it personal experience or professional experience and those ‑‑ those folks really value that ‑‑ that offer. Since the legislative day, two people who work directly with ‑‑ with representatives from ‑‑ from blue water ‑‑ the blue water area have contacted ‑‑ well, you know, either contacted us directly or ‑‑ or they contacted ‑‑ the person contacted the head of their lions club thinking well, we have to be associated with them. Right? And so that meant I got to go educate those people and, you know, and with them some ‑‑ some possible economic development stuff. So when you start to think about how these connections work, don't ever miss an opportunity. Right? If you get an opportunity to work with a policy maker, even if you don't think they're at all interested in what you do, they know a lot of people and they will ‑‑ their job is to connect ‑‑ to get votes and to do what they want to do. So as much as sometimes we don't care for some of their viewpoints, their skills are very useful and ‑‑ and tie into them just by connecting with them. So ‑‑
 >> And I think sometimes our role as council members are to be liaisons to the group that we were appointed to represent. I know for Vicki, meeting with the legislators and being here, it's a two‑part information sharing and being able to ‑‑ to get the information to the families and guardians and in turn, taking their ‑‑ their information to the legislators. I know I met with mine a few weeks ago on the 298, 234 and privatizing mental health services and he is a new rep. So it was all about giving information and providing education, and I think as council members, you know, that's ‑‑ that's sort of our role here is to keep them informed and be that information and education.
 >> I'll compound on that one more time but Michigan because of term limits, they're all the time.
 >> Yep.
 >> So ‑‑ and compared to other states, they're all new all the time. So it's a job we have to sort of take on and quite frankly it can be kind of fun. So that's all I'm going to say. You never know. You never know what you say to a policy maker, you don't know how that's going to end up on the other end. It's like that telephone game, right?
 >> True.
 >> Yes.
 >> So that's kind of entertaining at times but it's mostly worth your while, so don't ever think it's not.
 >> Is there any questions or discussions for Jim on the IL network? Or would anyone who was at legislative day ‑‑ I see a few of you here ‑‑ would you like to share what your experience was? Those three are an option.
 >> Legislative day ‑‑ this is Aaron Andres by the way.
 >> Sorry. Can I video tape you talking about it and tweet it?
 >> Aaron: Okay. Legislators and get that one‑on‑one feedback that usually we don't get to see and just give them in the UP a good vision of the geographical area we covered since we covered all of the UP is where the ‑‑ as far as sales goes for independent living. And just to get the word out that hey, we're still up here. We ‑‑ we need as well. So it was very nice to get faces with names and try to get that education out there and experience out there. Also, it was said about John Kevula. John just recently passed so our condolences goes out to his family as well. The one I really enjoyed was Bola Faye. Bow La Faye is relatively new. Just came into office. He himself has a disability, so it's nice to see that perspective of not only a person with a disability but a policy maker that knows firsthand experience what it's like to have a disability and, therefore, has a greater opportunity to influence public policy in terms of helping those individuals with disabilities. Thank you.
 >> Thanks for sharing, Aaron. Does anyone know how to spell Bola Faye's name?
 >> Oh. I'll look it up.
 >> All right. Any other questions or comments for Jim? All right. We'll go ahead. Are you ready to get ‑‑
 >> Unfortunately, not.
 >> Robin: Well, we're a little early for lunch.
 >> Anybody else that went to legislative day that would like to share?
 >> Robin: Well, Mairead was there and I was there.
 >> You got to go with Laura, right?
 >> Right.
 >> And Representative Canfield's office.
 >> It was pretty good. I ‑‑ I'm glad I got the chance to talk to her and get a better understanding of what's going on. And a representative of that office and I guess that's it.
 >> Robin: What area is that representing?
 >> The blue water area.
 >> Robin: Okay.
 >> You know, this ‑‑ this part of your thumb.
 >> One of the parts of the thumb that no one knows what it's called.
 >> Representative Canfield is the new chair of Michigan department of health and human service appropriations budget and that Michigan rehabilitation service funding is at. So it's ‑‑ it's a great ‑‑ the more relationships, connections, they have with us, the better because he's on a learning curve about our programs. Excited.
 >> I mean, one of the outcomes of that ‑‑ one of the immediate outcomes that you don't see, you know, if you just look at the budget is that we were invited to ‑‑ I'm pretty sure through that influence took to become a partner in something that they're now calling their at‑risk youth wrap around team, right?
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> And that's not something we would have ever heard about without some intervention through that office. Again, if you don't make that contact, you don't ‑‑ you may or may not ever get that. So you know? Where that will lead, I don't know.
 >> Great.
 >> Robin: I ‑‑ this is Robin. I was hoping to ask ‑‑ talk about this pre‑employment services and I am sure that MRS has a lot on that as well. My question is ‑‑ I know there is probably not a lot of data sort of where you have gone yet because it's so new and there are so many changes happening. But how often do we see these sort of earlier intervention into someone for VR would they use? How often do we see it actually growing into fruition and them being connected with employment after transition? Is that looking good?
 >> BSBP would have more data on the success, maybe not right off hand but BSBP has been working ‑‑ BSBP's been working with youth at earlier ages a lot.
 >> Yeah.
 >> So maybe you guys can anecdotally talk about how working at an earlier age has had a benefit.
 >> Well, you know, going back in history and yeah, we have and ‑‑ and there was a time when the transition age was 16. Then it was 14. Then it went back to 16. We said we're staying at 14 because we feel like the sooner you get involved, the better the outcome. I mean, we were kind of WIOA when WIOA wasn't cool. We always really believed that that early intervention, you know, way more than I even ‑‑ just ‑‑ I can't speak well enough for that, you know, that the outcomes for ‑‑ for people with disabilities when you get involved younger are going to be better because the more exposure that you have, the more work experience that you have, the more social experiences that you have, those soft skills, all of that, the better the outcome. You know? It's very frustrating to start working with someone at 19 or 20 years old. You know? We could have done so much more. Am I saying that correctly?
 >> Right. The key ‑‑ I think one of the keys ‑‑ key components is that working with persons with vision impairments, there is some vast preparation necessary. So working with them at age 14 allows for that to happen. You know, if you started working with a student at 17 ‑‑ 17 or 18, they're graduating from high school. They would be delayed in their secondary involvement because they would have to go for this adjustment and those kinds of things. So this allows for that, to get them in the mindset for that. They have a lot more exposure and experience job shadowing and all those kinds of things. Then once they graduate ‑‑ excuse me ‑‑ they are ready to compete with their, you know, their peers, college, or whatever they have chosen to go to.
 >> So more often than not, you would say when ‑‑ when they are ready for a job, the jobs are there for them or they have ‑‑ or get an actual job?
 >> I think any opportunity you have to provide someone more experiences, more opportunities, you know, more exposure ‑‑ that's the word I am looking for ‑‑ obviously, those work opportunities are going to be more plentiful. There's all ‑‑ a whole lot of hard work and there's nothing, you know, that's going to ‑‑ you know what I mean? That's still going to be there. The challenges still exist. But having that early intervention, if you will, I think helps. Helps just puts more eggs in your basket. You know? Gives you more opportunity.

 Also, doing some work with looking at policy for pre‑employment transition and looking at idea, I really do want to say the language in idea says the transition conversation needs to begin at 14. It says it right there in black and white. It also says that a transition plan is ‑‑ is expected and required at 16. It doesn't mean you can't have a transition plan at 14. It means you must have one by 16. So there's ‑‑ there's good and there's what's expected. There's nothing to say that a student cannot have a transition plan at age 14 or 15. I ‑‑ you know, I just want to say that because I hear that a lot. You know, we don't do ‑‑ transition plans aren't until 16. Well, that's true but it doesn't have to be that way.
 >> Right.
 >> I have three questions.
 >> Go for it, Aaron.
 >> Aaron: Aaron Andres. In regard to transitioning into employment services, I know has a dire need to be able to transition younger youth into transitional services and I believe there is somewhat of a delay in the paradigm shift when it comes to the ‑‑ the authorization of those services from MRS into an organization like sales that has the opportunity to go in ‑‑ to go into the school and teach people about transition limit. But one of our major barriers is we need that from MRS so that we can come in and approach the school directly and without that act, we can't really ‑‑ the school's not willing to work with us unless we get invited by MRS. So I know there's been movement on that but I just wondered if you knew any more as to possible changes that are coming forth or whatever that may improve that? And through my conversations with my executive director, there is progress being made but I just wondered if we could help in any way to speed that process up.
 >> Go ahead.
 >> Okay. This is Kevin Green from MRS. Aaron, I'm going to ‑‑ I ‑‑ I will pass this information on. I'm ‑‑ I do not work directly in the area so it would be inappropriate for me to comment or ‑‑ or ‑‑ or, you know, make any other additional references to it. I know that MRS and are working very closely together on the issue, so I will take it to Suzanne Howell, who is our director and the other individuals in our central office that are working on it so ‑‑
 >> Aaron: Thank you.
 >> Thank you.
 >> Aaron: The other one ‑‑ the other question was ‑‑ or statement was once we get people in transition to be able to work, the major issue is two things. One is transportation. Two is having the ability to gain access while working is very difficult when you need services to actually get up and go to work. So I know I've had this one more recently. But that's just something to be aware of too. Not only getting people ready, it's removing the barriers at a federal level to have the possibility of working. It's great to have the skills and ability to work but if you ultimately can't go out there and use your skills and abilities that you have learned over the course of your study or whatever, then it's very frustrating and difficult to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

 (Laughter)
 >> Okay.
 >> Well said. Well said. All right. Is there any other ‑‑ does anyone on the phone ‑‑ any council members on the phone have anything to add or any questions?
 >> Hi. This is Rebecca. I just wanted to kind of echo what Aaron was saying about like it's one thing to be prepared and gear up for working. But if you can't actually get there, then that's a problem and so I think that yes, getting ready and things like that for like talking about and planning to work is really important. But I think it's important to also make sure that the person can logistically get where they need to go and have the accommodations that they need when they're actually like on the job.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> I would applaud what my two fellow council members said and just yep. Word.
 >> Well, and last night we had talked about at dinner some comments that I have heard from families and young adults with the WIOA and pre‑employment is that they're getting involved and registered and getting the skills but in some areas, there's no employment opportunities there. And so that is a big dilemma, and so I'm not sure, you know, what's being looked at in that arena because with wanting, you know, minimum‑wage jobs and things like that, in some areas it's just not available. You have people being enrolled and you have people that have the skills but there's no connection to employment. So I don't know if that's something we can talk to MRS outside of this meeting and have a work group on it or ‑‑ or how that's being handled, Kevin?
 >> I ‑‑ I don't know. Since I don't work in the ‑‑ you know what I mean? I don't mean to sound like it's not my job.
 >> No. No. I am sure you'll take it back.
 >> But we can't be experts in everything so yeah, definitely will.
 >> Are you saying they're training for positions that are not available? Or is that ‑‑ is that what I'm hearing you say?
 >> It's being trained and getting the skills, and then there's nothing to send them to.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> It's registering, it's identifying them and registering them and trying to figure out what to train them in because what are you going to send them to?
 >> Right. And that is ‑‑ that is a piece of WIOA. That's a big piece. Sort of the helping people to identify opportunities for employment where there is a need and, you know, looking at labor market information. Looking at skills and abilities and ‑‑ and basically working those two elements together. Those abilities of the individual, looking at the needs of the labor market, and really helping people to choose careers where there is opportunity for advancement, to obtain, advance, and maintain employment. I've seen there is a lot of conversation about consumer choice, informed choice, and at the risk of being a little controversial, you know, informed choice is not necessarily that's what I want, you just have to give it.
 >> Yeah. Yeah.
 >> Informed choice is helping all of us to understand, meaning VR, to understand what your needs are, what ‑‑ and ‑‑ and your skills. Us to help you to understand what your skills and abilities using our expertise and vocational rehabilitation, where are there jobs?
 >> Is there a process in place that when some of us hear these stories that we can share them? Then that way, you can identify the areas and if there is trends happening in those areas.
 >> Well, the trend really, as someone who worked kind of ‑‑ not kind of ‑‑ in education. I am communications professional for the educational community, there is going to be so much automation and artificial intelligence is going to change radically. You know? It's going to eradicate so many jobs. The shift in this country is slowly moving towards where it has to be student driven, personalized education. Children have to be able to explore their passions. We're going to get rid of standardized tests. You know? Even colleges and private high schools are already starting to do away with grades and put less emphasis on grades because it's killing our kids. The level of mental health issues in teenagers is sky rocketing, as we all know. If anyone followed that 13 reasons why Netflix series and all the conversations about that.

 So I think it's actually a perfect opportunity because the more technologically advanced we become, driverless cars God willing will be a solution for people with disabilities as far as transportation opportunities if we get to that point. Or Uber, you know ‑‑ I don't know, a driverless Uber. Something of that nature. In our school, we are teaching kids less to prepare for a job but to learn the quote unquote soft skills that will help them with whatever they choose to do in life. Right? As long as you can collaborate and be creative and think critically and communicate, you will be set up for success. There's so many apps and everything is revolving around technology, people are going to create their own jobs and this shouldn't be excluding people with disabilities. So it's not so much that we should look at like the labor market I don't think because a lot of those jobs are going to disappear.

 I think there is a tremendous endless opportunity for learners of all abilities to kind of reset the mindset and really do what you're passionate about and not try and fit into a box that's probably going to be eliminated anyway. I mean, I don't know. Really, don't you think the emphasis should be really on ‑‑ on those kinds of skills?
 >> I think it has to be both and I think you have to look at ‑‑ you know, absolutely. I mean most people ‑‑ not that money doesn't matter but most people do jobs because it's what they love to do. We also need to ‑‑ really ‑‑ you know, I have heard the word braiding used quite a bit lately. I feel like that's kind of an example of that where you need to use your skills, your abilities, your love, and then you need to look at ‑‑ and when I think about labor market, I'm not really looking at ‑‑ you know, there is lots of stuff out there about trending professions, what that is going to look like in five years. What that's going to look like in ten years. That can't be your only monitor but I think we need to consider many elements in helping people as we do with our own selves and our children. You know? We have to look at the big picture and use lots of resources, not just one for sure because, you know, labor market's fine but then there's other things. Like what you're saying.
 >> People are going to be inventing jobs, right? Like you can develop a software app, you're going to be ‑‑ you know, create your own job.
 >> That is where that futuristic stuff.
 >> Right.
 >> Because you can see that. Ten years ago, what did they say? And ‑‑ and someone said not all jobs require a college education. Not all careers. And quite honestly, some careers that don't require a four‑year liberal arts education are very good jobs and very lucrative and very successful. So we need to broaden our horizon because, you know, even as parents ourselves, we're saying our kids have to go to college. That's how you're successful.
 >> Right. Right.
 >> And also with people basically creating their own jobs, I've found out what ‑‑ what I've been doing lately is just experimenting with certain things and seeing what sticks. I ‑‑ I've thought about creating a Podcast on ‑‑ it's a distribution network called SPREEKER where you can share your Podcast on social media and stuff and I really would love to work in social media space. I'm just not sure how to go about it.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> That's a ‑‑ that's a good point because a lot of ‑‑ a lot of jobs that people, especially with challenges with transportation and getting out of the house and those kind of things, they work a lot from home. Or they ‑‑ they ‑‑ for instance, a job that is contact based and I may only be actually in the classroom teaching a group of students for couple hours a week. But I'm doing a lot of work at home to get ready for that ‑‑ those hours.
 >> Yep.
 >> And my pay reflects that. But I was recently told that it does not ‑‑ it does not meet the requirements of competitive, integrated employment. CIE.
 >> Yeah.
 >> Yep. Yep.
 >> Sorry. Because ‑‑ because I don't work enough hours a month and an integrated setting. But it's ‑‑ it's ‑‑ you're right, Alex. There needs to be that selectability to work with what works for the individual.
 >> Yep.
 >> And what their skills and passions are towards.
 >> It's been a great conversation. Thank you to everyone who added. Rebecca, do you have anything else to add?
 >> I was just going to say that I think getting education on more the soft skills is a really good idea because I know, for example, in my job there have been different situations where something might seem really obvious on how to do it. But because of my disability, like I haven't really experienced it. For example, I have to wash an arm band for our research project and I was like I don't know how to do laundry. I don't know how to do this. So that caused a little bit of stress on my part because my supervisor just assumed like just wash it. You should know how to do this. But I don't. And so I think the soft skills idea is really good because some of this stuff might seem obvious, like I said. But it's not for people with disabilities, especially youth, because we just don't know. We don't have that experience.
 >> Well said. Thank you for adding that.
 >> Robin: I think we are going to go ahead and break for lunch. Take like ten minutes to get lunch and then please come back in the room because we have a presentation by disability network Oakland Macomb. Kellie is going to give the presentation. So after we get our food, maybe rest from break, make your way back in here. We'll try and be back in ten minutes. We're going to start without you. No, I'm just kidding.

 (Laughter)
 >> Robin: All right. We'll pause this and come back.
 (Break)
 >> Robin: Party people. All right. We have a lunch presentation from the director of Oakland display network, and I will probably be moving out of your way. So you're not looking through me to see Kellie's presentation. But I will hand it over to you.
 >> There is nothing to see, you know, so you can look at me. You don't have to move. You are good where you're at.
 >> Yay.
 >> Yeah. So my name's Kellie Winn, I am disability network of Oakland and Macomb at independent center for living. I was asked to be here just to talk about some of our services we offer in Oakland and Macomb County. So like all the other centers, we do the five core. But on top of that, I think is what we're really ‑‑ we set up with all of our information, paperwork, that kind of stuff so that consumers can come to us who we normally can't get our to our building. From there, we will help them fill out paperwork if they need to, help them do applications, whatever they need, we set up shop. Or give them further information from there. So that's a program that's been really beneficial to us because we get out into the more rural communities to be able to help people that can't normally get to us. Another big thing, we have a program that we do with the veterans with the VA, and we do a lot of peer support and computer training for veterans who come back. So that's a big program. On top of that, along with the blue water CIL sitting over there, we do a program to support services for veterans and their families. So we keep veterans from becoming homeless, give them resources. That's another big program that we do.

 So we have a very large veteran population in Oakland and Macomb that we touch. Another pretty neat thing is we have a whole assistive technology room at our center. It's set up ‑‑ it has a bunch of computers that consumers can come and use and also a bunch of ADT devices. We have two AP trainers who will go out. All somebody has to do is set up an appointment and we will go to you. No charge to you. Do a demonstration on devices that ‑‑ it could be communication, it can be safety, it can be little, small hand held devices. We'll sit with you, talk with you, see what you need. We'll tell you where you can find them, the cheapest way to find them, and that kind of stuff. That's a really big program we've done for years. We also do the assistive technology devices to the ‑‑ to bigger organizations too who want that.

 One of the things that we have gotten in the last couple years is prevention of elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation. We actually do this in two different ‑‑ two different ways. We do presentations out in the community. When I say out in the community, I mean we do presentations probably three times a week. We probably do 75 at least presentations all over the place. This is the senior centers, nursing facilities, anyone ‑‑ any group who wants to hear how ‑‑ how you prevent elder abuse, what signs to look for, what you can do if you think somebody is a victim, and take it from there. We also just started this year taking that a step further and training their staff on what to look for on side of it. Just started this year. And again, those services we have through different funding, through different organizations, and anybody can call us up, get that presentation at no charge to them. We go out all over Oakland and Macomb County and do that for anybody.

 Most of our fellow other CILs do benefits planning. We have two certified benefits planners on our staff. Can come in and have planning done. We go out and we do disability awareness training to different ‑‑ we've done them in schools. We've done them to businesses. Things like that. Our newest program is called wreck it with Gina, which stands for recreation, education, and community inclusion. I left my jacket in the car because it's hot outside but our big "wreck it" logo is on it. That is one of our new initiatives that we're really pushing in the community, community inclusion and recreation for all. So we partnered up with a few different ‑‑ right now, with a 5K walk. It's called flap jack. And we've made it instead of just a 5K walk, it's walk, row, and run. So we actually had one of the trainers come out to our facility once a week, and is training everybody to do this activity. So we meet once a week at the park, and we walk, we roll, and we run through the park and to train them all for the 5K that takes place in June. So it's been amazing. Then we've had two chronic pain management classes that we're certified in. So that's a new venture for us this year. It's been ‑‑ we have a lot more ideas to really take that a lot further. We want to make our communities much more accessible and adaptable for everyone.

 Some of our programs ‑‑ on ‑‑ what kind of questions do we have? Or ‑‑
 >> I'm just glad there is someone from my area here. Oakland County. Huntington Woods.
 >> Oh, okay.
 >> I always feel like I'm the lone Detroiter.
 >> We just moved. We moved into a facility because we have just been growing so much. We are now at 15 mile and John R. I welcome anyone to come and visit. It's a great facility. It is ‑‑ we now have yoga. We are in the process of getting an instructor to do yoga. Persons with disabilities, we have a full warehouse area that we do so many different trainings in and stuff. It's a really fun group. So please. It's in Troy. Yes. When I was looking at it, I thought it was Madison Heights the whole time. Right on the border of Oakland and Macomb Counties, which was the goal to be right on the border. We were way far out in Macomb County.
 >> So you no longer have two offices? You just have the one, central?
 >> Correct. One office now, which is much better.
 >> Good.
 >> Keeping everybody under one roof.
 >> What would you say is the biggest area of need that you see people coming to the center asking for help with?
 >> Probably the biggest area of need is housing and it's the hardest area. But that ‑‑ that would be ‑‑ we find a lot of housing requests in our area.
 >> So what are the barriers to the area?
 >> There's not a lot of portable, accessible ‑‑ you know, we work very closely with all of our ‑‑ our housing partners to get ‑‑ we have a lot of relationships with different landlords who keep us informed all the time of everything that opens up.
 >> Would it ‑‑ would it be appropriate to say that if something is newly built, you know, because it's newer, it's probably going to be more expensive? Because I found that in my own personal experience.
 >> I don't know if I could generally say that across because I haven't been to all of them. You know? That's not somewhere I go out and I check them all. So I wouldn't want to answer that. You know what I mean? So ‑‑ but I would go with probably any newly‑built stuff is generally, you know ‑‑ exactly. Exactly.
 >> Any other questions for Kellie about Oakland Macomb?
 >> I was just curious where everybody's from.
 >> Of course.
 >> Robin: I'm Robin Bennett. I'm from Wayne County. Very close to Washtenaw.
 >> Okay.
 >> I'm Rodney Craig. I live in Genesee County.
 >> I told you I'm Oakland County. Huntington Woods, right near Detroit zoo. You know?
 >> I live in the blue water area.
 >> I actually live in Kalamazoo but obviously, we have seven field offices, one of which is at Cadillac place in Detroit.
 >> I'm Jim Whalen. I have a place to live in Port Huron but haven't been there for so long.

 (Laughter)
 >> That's where I live. Port Huron.
 >> Aaron Andres from Marquette.
 >> I'm Leamon Jones and I live in Wayne County. Actually, Detroit.
 >> Kevin Green.
 >> Lisa. I have three adult children in Oakland.
 >> Oh.
 >> You live in Oakland County?
 >> I actually live in Macomb. I live in Macomb County. We do Oakland and Macomb County and I live in Macomb. It's much better. Everyone's like you just got located but it's much better.
 >> Robin: Well, thank you for sharing. It's always good to learn stuff that's going on.
 >> Rodney, I can send it to you in e‑mail. You can post it on ‑‑ online. All right.
 >> Thank you so much.
 >> Thank you.
 >> Robin: We will go ahead and move forward on the agenda to the state wide plan for independent living. And I guess that's me first. So we received back in ‑‑
 >> April.
 >> Robin: Well, the original finding was last ‑‑
 >> 2016. Yeah.
 >> Robin: That we needed to choose one DSE. So ACL kind of gave us a big job to, you know, move forward with. So we ‑‑ we moved forward on trying to plan for that. Then in April is when we received the "dear colleague" letter from ACL, which gave us some instructions on how to go about, you know, making this amendment. So this amendment that we're going to be moving forward with is in your packets. It's been drafted and written out, and if there is any discussion, I think we first need to motion to give me ‑‑ to empower me to find the amendment and once we have that motion, we can have any discussion with that people would want. So do we have that motion?
 >> I ‑‑
 >> Okay. Do we have a second?
 >> I think Aaron.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Aaron. I will open that up for discussion about this amendment that we have the information in our packets. If there is any questions, I'm sure Rodney could answer or I can answer.
 >> I just want to acknowledge the hard work that went into making this happen and the coordination and collaboration between BSBP and MRS and SILC, and that's really all I had to say. It wasn't something we expected when we wrote this bill. We had no real, true guidance at that point. When we got the guidance, I think that all parties came together and ‑‑ and worked pretty collaboratively. Rodney did a great job heading this and getting it to move along. I thought it was interesting when Rodney, you shared with me ‑‑ I will share it with the group ‑‑ that I think ‑‑ and I don't know if Lisa or Leamon read this but I guess Bill had indicated that none of the other BSB ‑‑ or blind service directors at the recent conference knew much about how to go about this type of an amendment and had heard much about it. So pretty thankful that he could ‑‑ he could ‑‑ I think had some information and knowledge there. Made him feel good.
 >> Robin: Yeah. As we learned at SILC congress, I believe 22 other states are looking at having to do this same sort of thing because they had ‑‑ they had two DSEs named in their original plans. So ‑‑ but I think, Rodney, did you tell me that we are the only one that has worked with this much success?
 >> I don't know if we're the only one yet, but based upon what director Robinson had said, it sounded like we were well ahead of the curve is I think were his exact words.
 >> That's where he likes to be. And he doesn't like surprises.
 >> No, he does not.
 >> Robin: That is definitely a big part to our staff in Lansing. Rodney and Tracy. We thank you so much and, you know, kind of helping us follow these instructions sent by ACL. So if there's no more discussion, we can go ahead and take a vote on that. Do you want to take a roll call vote or just by voice?
 >> Council.
 >> Robin: All right. Let's take a roll call vote. Will you, please ‑‑
 >> Yes or no? Is that what they're ‑‑
 >> Yeah, just yes or no.
 >> All right.
 >> Abstained.
 >> Aaron?
 >> Yes.
 >> Robin Bennett?
 >> Yes.
 >> Gabriella Burman?
 >> Yes.
 >> Lisa cook Gordon?
 >> Yes.
 >> Sara Grivetti?
 >> Yes.
 >> Michael Hamm?
 >> Excused.
 >> Excused? Kelsey Kleimola? Excused. Rebecca Pardon?
 >> Yes.
 >> Lorraine Warner?
 >> Yes.
 >> Jim Whalen?
 >> Yes.
 >> Robin: All right. So approved. Thanks for empowering me to sign that on behalf of the SILC. Now, we will get the status report on the state plan and I think Rodney can take that for us.
 >> I would be happy to. Sara?
 >> Do we ‑‑ do we need ‑‑ okay.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Lisa. Thanks for the support. All right. Now that we have that ‑‑
 >> Rodney: Okay. This is the first look at our current SPIL of the time period of our current SPIL. I think this document, the information we put together, is going to be a big task to the SPIL committee. Reviewing this, taking a look where this goes at, and then bringing recommendations back to the full council. There's still some measurements in this that need to be worked out with the CIL network to make sure the measurements are accurate. But those have been put into place and by the time of the next ‑‑ the next semi‑annual report, those will be ‑‑ those numbers will be a part of the report at the time.

 Really, you know, those who ‑‑ who were here and most of the council members that saw the older version or the previous SPIL version of this report, it's very similar. It takes a look at each objective and measure indicator and then determine where we're at with those measurable indicators. But there is one new portion in that, looking at the SPIL, and it revolves around barrier identification. We had a quick conversation with council members on this before of what we were trying to do and this is the first time we actually have data to talk about what we're doing. When we talk about the barrier identifications, what this is are systematic barriers that consumers are facing when they come into a CIL and create an independent‑living plan. So they can ‑‑ can talk about the systematic barrier and that goal is that something in the community that is ‑‑ is causing an issue when they're making their ILP. So we now have some concrete data that goes along with that as to ‑‑ it's almost a needs assessment based upon what the consumers are telling us in the community.

 By a large margin, when you look at the chart on page four, the overall barrier faced by the consumer is access to goods and services not being available. That means a program's not available, a program no longer has funding, they're on a waiting list. A lot of things that is causing a barrier there. By far, this is the largest thing that our consumers are facing when they're opening independent living plans. The second area is revolving around online applications or paper applications are either an accessible or difficult to complete or comprehend. A major issue. There is a systematic barrier with physical access to some buildings that is still showing up over and over when the independent living plans are being created.

 Then the final one to kind of take note on. There is a communication barrier that often has been spoken when someone is creating their goals in independent living center. That's communicating issues with the staff, and then the programs themselves not being adequately explained to the consumers so they can make decisions based upon that. Again, the goal of this is to empower the council and the CIL network to take a look at these. The local CILs can take a look at their specific center region with this information, and then SILC can take a look at the state picture with this information. So that's one of the primary, newer and more important parts of that report.

 The common disability agenda is another part of that. Terry is going to speak to this portion in there. So I'm going to defer at this moment until we get to that portion. We also have another tracking that we're now able to do that the council is going to be able to look at. We can now take a look at the referrals going to BSBP and MRS and back from BSBP and MRS to CILs. That's going to be an important aspect to take a look at the activities that we spoke about earlier this morning, like with the pre‑employment transition services and how are those things working out? And, Robin, you had spoke about ‑‑ a little bit earlier, you had asked a question on are we taking a look at what those outcomes are? And ‑‑ and the question to that is yes. This method is the first time we've been able to tell that referral data and once we can tell that referral data has occurred, we can then do that long‑term follow on of ‑‑ of that individual to determine is somebody who works with VR and IL more successful than somebody who works with just let's say a VR situation? So there is a lot of data questions that are ‑‑ I think are going to be able to be answered, as you had spoken earlier this morning.

 I'd be happy to answer any other ‑‑ any other questions on it. It's a long report. It's kind of dry with some of the numbers. But it does play an important part in helping the council, and I think the SPIL committee is going to be empowered to dig a lot deeper into those numbers and get a determination of what they need and what the impact is of those numbers.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Rodney. Any questions or comments?
 >> Sara: For the SPIL report, it's good to see where we're ‑‑ where we're lacking in data because like it's just ‑‑ you know, right now, a point in time look at maybe how we need to at the network level, collect data at the network level. Barrier modules great. That's the first time I've seen it so ‑‑ and it's a good number. So I think overall things look really good. We've just got some gaps to fill.
 >> Jim: This is Jim Whalen. I just want to comment. I'm not talking about the whole network of centers. I am talking about blue water. Putting that hat on. And I know that because we ‑‑ our ‑‑ our last few years, shifted a lot of user entity services, that data is working its way I think into some different reporting areas now in our reports. But it doesn't allow me to say okay, we're doing this well now. How do we get back to this other balance? And those barrier data that we have will allow me to say okay, now here is where I shift back first, right? And I think as ‑‑ as the centers work with MRS and BSBP, we will also identify how to ‑‑ under the new WIOA ‑‑ how to balance this stuff out. So I ‑‑ I think even if we see gaps or low places, it will help us going forward and so I kind of think this is a really neat sort of experimental way to figure out how we're going to provide these services in our new environment. So ‑‑ and ‑‑ I mean it looks great to begin with, so it's something we can really use, right? You know, it's ‑‑ it's ‑‑
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> Jim: I know that sometimes we don't do this but ‑‑ especially in our federal government ‑‑ but it's good to work from actual fact information basis sometimes so ‑‑ so thanks, Rodney. That's going to be good. This is going to be good over time.
 >> And I will say to your point, Sara, most of the data is collected. What is ‑‑ what is ‑‑ what we need to verify is just making sure that it's consistently pulled across the network.
 >> Sara: Yeah, and I was more kind of into the student specific data around pre‑employment transition services because there are multiple definitions. And so to be able to ensure that we're collecting data in the right buckets based on definitions I think is something we have to monitor. So I think it's good to see where we have opportunity for improvement early in the process.
 >> Yeah, early.
 >> Robin: Is there anyone on the phone with any comments? All right. So we will go ahead, if there is no more discussion, and go on to the next with ‑‑ with ‑‑ don't we have more to discuss within that?
 >> The motion I think was to accept the SPIL monitoring report.
 >> Robin: I didn't know if we had more people to give or not. I mean, if we're ready to take the vote ‑‑
 >> Item two that you want? Just the ‑‑ items three and below are not.
 >> Robin: Okay. Got it. Got it. Thank you for clarifying that. I was a little confused by the way the agenda was formatted. I'm sorry about that. So we have motion on the floor to accept SPIL status report. We've had discussion. All those in favor, say I.
 >> I.
 >> Robin: Any on the phone?
 >> I.
 >> Robin: Thank you. We'll put that on file. And then we will move on to the SPIL committee report from Jim.
 >> Jim: I think we just had that.

 (Laughter)
 >> Robin: I'm just going by what the agenda's telling me.
 >> Jim: Robin, though, the other part was the primary activities of the SPIL committee over the last few months have obviously been getting the amendment ready. But the other thing I would say is we can't rest on our laurels too long because, you know, time will ‑‑ it ‑‑ it will be time now to start thinking about how ‑‑ how we do our progress and what plane that will take. The word on the street from ACL is that they are going to ‑‑ and I think Rodney ‑‑ Rodney has also heard this ‑‑ they're going to expect us to gather input more frequently prior to putting together goals in the future. And not just ‑‑ not just Michigan. At the national level. So they are really going to expect an ongoing sort of planning process, and that's not a bad thing.

 So those people who were on that committee and are waiting to get their turn, their shot at this, it's coming.
 >> Robin: All right. Thank you. So next, we have Terri giving us an update on the common disability agenda.
 >> Thank you, Robin. One of the things we were charged with doing was hosting some public forums around the state to get feedback from individuals with disabilities, community members, families, everybody. Where are barriers? What someone might want to change, what's working? And even some feedback from folks. So we have begun hosting those. We ‑‑ we knew we wouldn't have a whole lot of data, and I ‑‑ I coined a word at the last meeting and warned you data would be skewed.

 (Laughter)
 >> And it ‑‑ it might be a little bit. We'll see. Because so far, four of them were in the UP.
 >> To be skewed.
 >> To be skewed. So of those four that ‑‑ or six that we've hosted so far, the three issues that rose quickly to the top were transportation, housing, and employment/financial security. Okay. So couple of those together. Not surprising to me at least, one of the other things that's rumbled loudly in our groups is about creating effective advocacy. Whether self‑advocacy or leadership. And talk a little bit in the next section as well. As well as general accessibility and resources. Education comes up, it hasn't risen to that level yet. When we're asking folks questions in the forums and this is really just to share with you a little bit about the experience that folks have. They are asked to give the number one issue, what they thought we were going to talk about or what we absolutely must talk about in the forum, and then there's some work that they have to do with that topic. So we get those almost votes if you will of number one and number two. And you would think that if you have an opportunity to go to a second topic, they choose whatever number two was. We're only seeing that in about half of the ‑‑ half of the time. Part of the reason for that is in that discussion that we asked them to have where they make a statement of importance, give a recommendation ‑‑ give some recommendations about what they expect to see in Michigan's future, talk about what's working and what's not working, they really begin to experience how ‑‑ where the barriers are.

 At the Traverse City forum, housing was number one on their list. Employment was a very, very strong number two. For the second topic, obviously the first one they talked about was housing and the second topic they chose, which I always throw that back to the group and say here's where you voted. They said we need to talk about transportation because as they were talking about housing and thinking about employment, they realized how much of an impact transportation had. So we see those kinds of things popping up. And so ‑‑ but some of the recommendations that are coming out of the groups are pretty creative. I was joking with a group in the UP. I said if we can figure out transit in the UP, we can figure it out anywhere. So I think can really help move Michigan forward.

 Just a little statistical information for you, about 60% so far are women. If you think about our service system, that's kind of low so we have a pretty nice mix. We have 60% of folks with a disability as well. Currently, which my goal in doing these forums, we have fewer than 40% of attendees that are representing an agency. I hope that trend continues. We do have six coming up in the next couple of weeks. We have one in Jackson, one in Kalamazoo, and one in Alpena. All the last couple weeks of this month. Then three currently scheduled in June in Ann Arbor and Muskegon. I told you we would have at least 21 and it looks like we are going to have a few more than that based on some recommendations from communities who say hey we've got a group of people. So those will be scheduled through probably ‑‑ my hope was to have most of them done by the end of August, and I think that's still doable. So that's where we're at so far.
 >> Robin: Good. Thanks. Is there any questions or comments for Terri?
 >> Have you had any reporters show up to these?
 >> We've had one, yes.
 >> I can ‑‑ I can give you the media effort for you. So we've had ‑‑ we've had one NPR interview. I did an NPR interview for it. Robin's done a WJR interview for them. We had three press releases. We had a front‑page story in the Marquette paper that interviewed Aaron. Aaron was on TV for news channel reporting for that.
 >> I never saw it.
 >> I haven't seen any of these.
 >> We're trying to find the online portion of it.
 >> I couldn't find the WJR ever. Did you ‑‑ did you see it?
 >> We were told that it would be provided to us on the website. I ‑‑ I haven't heard anything since.
 >> We'll get it. We'll get it. Then this morning, the dome magazine in Lansing, we have an editorial in that.
 >> Robin: That's great. Can you send every one of those out to us?
 >> Most of them have went ‑‑ have went out to ‑‑
 >> Robin: To us?
 >> We haven't mailed it directly to the council members. They just went to the social media sources.
 >> Robin: Please, send it to us. Doesn't everyone want to see them?
 >> I check social media.
 >> Robin: I didn't see it. No.
 >> How do you go to social media?
 >> Michigan State wide independent living council on Facebook, it's there.
 >> Or even You Tube, wouldn't it be?
 >> We haven't done a You Tube channel.
 >> So I can go to the SILC website and ‑‑
 >> Most of it's on the SILC website as well.
 >> But if it's a link we have on our phones, we can share multiple ways on our phones.
 >> How many of you guys are SILC Facebook friends or likes? That is a great way to get it out, yeah. The world.
 >> The problem is I don't think we have ‑‑ like I couldn't post the video I took this morning I don't think.
 >> Robin and Terri can now.
 >> Okay.
 >> I'll check that.
 >> That link on there. The one thing from a logistics perspective I noticed is we've been relying heavily on the CILs to promote these events. That's been a mixed bag of success. We have noticed also that transportation in some areas has been a barrier for individuals. Either to get there or to stay for the length of the event. We expected that. In some areas, we didn't expect it. So it's definitely reportable. So we're going to sort of beef up the marketing effort a bit because I ‑‑ my hope is to have as much community feedback as we can get. I'm happy to talk with one person at a time, but I think we can get ‑‑ I think we can get more people in there.
 >> What is the average attendance?
 >> Well, we've had six with about 40 people there. So about what? Yeah, we had a couple with four. Couple with a dozen. So ‑‑
 >> Okay.
 >> I have two questions. The first one is when you ‑‑ partly because your attendance rate is low, which is okay ‑‑ I mean, it's just what it is but because it's low, once we collect all the qualitative information, can we put this into a survey? Like develop a survey from what we're getting, what you're hearing of themes? Then develop a quantitative measurement of barriers?
 >> We will have an electronic and copied version. Then what works best for them.
 >> I am just wondering if you use the qualitative you get to develop this survey. It helps validate the information you're collecting and be ‑‑ I'm not saying a survey, like what you are developing isn't a good idea to collect more input but then when we wrap all this up, if we did it the quantitative way.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> With all the things we gathered. We could ‑‑ the attendance rate being low makes it slightly ‑‑ it doesn't make it statistically sound.
 >> Right.
 >> Yeah.
 >> Now that the word's getting out about the fact that they're actually happening places, we actually had a county call us and said they knew we had been there and couldn't attend. Said could you come back? Yeah. You know, we like this opportunity.
 >> The second question is as we start rolling out employment first through state agency through the community of mental health and community organizations are being, you know, contracts are being amended to drive competitive, integrative employment. Did you hear anything specific about employment?
 >> I heard from a few CROs, as well as some individuals with disabilities who have had some job changes based on ‑‑ I'm not sure exactly which law they're referencing ‑‑ but who were told you can't work a particular position anymore because it's not an integrated setting. So individuals who had been working a government contract job, like a sheltered workshop ‑‑
 >> W1 contract.
 >> Yeah. In a community environment. Because that was viewed a nonintegrated setting, they lost that contract. Now, there's no opportunity for the person to find ‑‑ or gain employment in that rural community. And so there are some concerns about where financial opportunities exist. In the UP, we heard loud and clear that if and when there are jobs available, there's so much competition ‑‑ single parents with degrees ‑‑ the economic environment, you know, I don't want to say employment rate's dropping but I'm hearing it's not as healthy as it might appear to be.
 >> So you said you got ‑‑ you had feedback from CRO staff and ‑‑ and also people with disabilities. So more specifically, what did the people with disabilities say about ‑‑ did they share that they lost their jobs?
 >> Yes. Yes.
 >> Okay. Okay. So they went from ‑‑ were they working and making a competitive wage and now are no longer working?
 >> Yes. Correct.
 >> Okay.
 >> And that was a relatively small sample.
 >> Yeah, I recognize that. Appreciate that. Yeah.
 >> Robin: Thank you for that. All right. Let ‑‑ we're moving on to Terri again. With respect person first language fits in with what the council is working on.
 >> Okay. Two things in regard to sort of the reason we're tackling the topic and one is that in regard to some of the ‑‑ the question of how do we better advocate for ourselves? And those discussions that have been coming up at public forums, we're hearing individuals that said I ‑‑ I want to be spoken about or I want to speak about myself in an empowering way. So much of what I read is stigmatizing or limiting so how do we do that in a powerful way?

 One of the other reasons we are tackling the topic is so many of the council members now are being asked to talk to media or are being asked to speak in public or attend a forum. The message that we send about the work that we do and the value in communities can be powerful. I don't often think we give enough credit to how powerful the word we are ‑‑ we use ‑‑ really are. So I want to just facilitate a discussion a little bit about that and ‑‑ I don't know ‑‑ you can take it where you want to take it. So with that in mind, recognizing that what we say does leave an impression on folks. I mean, even if I were to say a simple word that doesn't have any emotional attachment to it. Okay? If I say the word ball, each of you has an image of a ball that pops in your head. No, not all are going to look the same so might be different sizes or different colors or for different uses. But nonetheless, the word ball has that kind of power to put an image in your head. Okay? Every time we speak, we do that. We can ‑‑ we can portray a positive image or a negative image sometimes with some of the words that we use. And the work we do is so critical in helping people move forward to gain more independent lives. It's in the way that we speak, we can change that image or we can empower someone, I don't know why we wouldn't do that. Okay? So we need to be intentional about that. So that's part of the reason we're having the discussion is because sometimes we just don't think about it. We go about our business, talking the talk, doing what we do, just moving along because there's so much to be done.

 So part of the reason I was asked to do this is because of that but also to keep that intention at the front of our mind. So if we're having conversation with individuals, particularly with media or if you know there is going to be a conversation coming up, one of the things that has been recommended by our media specialist is that you plan ahead. Make sure you give yourself enough time. Make sure you think about the kinds of questions or conversations that might come up and how you are going to respond to those. For some of us, it helps to actually say our answer out loud. Okay? So we know what kind of words or jot a few notes down. Want to make sure to throw out the statistic is a big factor so do a plan ahead. They also recommend that you be concise. Ramble on and give much more details than we need to. Get to the point. That helps people figure out if they want to listen to you or not. Okay? Break it down and be as concise as you can.

 If you have an opportunity to make it personal, do that. Okay? You don't have to give a whole lot of details but that connectedness, as human beings, we want to connect. We want to get it. A lot of people don't understand the situation until there's a face to put to it, and so think about how can I make this personal? If not you personally, who do you know? What is the impact in your community? Then we want to focus on some of those positive reflections. I'm not just saying that to be all warm and fuzzy but there are already so many stigmas and so many negative things we can point to, if there is a positive twist you can put on something, we're all drawn to that. Okay? We want that. We want to support those positive efforts. So put a positive reflection. When this happened, this was a good thing. Or if this happened, look what that would mean to me.

 Lastly, again when you are talking with media or with groups, leave them with an idea. I don't care if it's a question that they need to think about or a real, big point that you wanted to make. Energize them with an action item. Okay? Something rather than oh, that was nice to hear about. Okay. Thanks. Okay? Leave them with a grab because they're part of the solution too. That make sense?
 >> Yeah.
 >> So when we think about, again, those kinds of words and those kinds of messages, when we ‑‑ when we're talking with folks, our goal is really to support the IL network and all the work that's happening there. Let's think about the IL network for a minute. There's a lot of partners connected to it. They each have different jobs or different focuses, right? But the IL network as a whole, what's their main job? If you had to put it all in a blob.
 >> Advocate?
 >> Advocate? Okay. Other words that come to mind?
 >> Supporting people with disabilities to gain those opportunities and access.
 >> Education.
 >> Okay.
 >> Access.
 >> Just simply to get people with disabilities independently responsible.
 >> I feel a lot of heads nodding to all those words. So there's a lot of different ways to do that, whether it's employment, education, or access. But we're talking about empowering people, right? In lots of different ways. It's about empowering people. I think that some of the words that we use can indeed do that. Okay? So one of the discussions I want to have or to offer the ‑‑ the group is a concept that we heard a lot about over the years. It's called person first language. Okay? And that really focuses on what? Describe that in a sentence or two.
 >> It's the whole consumer‑driven mentality, right? That the person at the center receiving the services is also the person at the center of kind of designing those services and ‑‑ you know?
 >> Before anything else, I am Robin Bennett, person, and I have skills and talents and desires that don't ‑‑ it ‑‑ it's not my wheel chair first, it's me first.
 >> Okay. Anyone who's been around for a while, there's a strong drive behind it that really looks at the whole person. Okay? A disability is one characteristic or one part of an individual. It doesn't necessarily need to be a primary focus or certainly defining label for an individual. So there are lots of examples of ways that we see person first language happening and not happening in our communities. We still see all over the newspaper people talking about the disabled. Okay? Rather than people with disabilities. Or the epileptic rather than a person with epilepsy. Someone who is wheel‑chair bound, rather than someone who uses a wheel chair. And so we need to be ‑‑ have our ear tuned to some of those words and phrases and simply think about is there a way we can say something in a more empowering way? If truly that's what our network is called to do.

 So again, seeing many nods about wanting to validate a whole person. I wanted to throw out another discussion that's happening in parts of our community that talks about identity first language. That kind of takes the twist of owning a culture. Okay? There was lots of discussion when person first language really became sort of the conversation amongst the community about well, is it just about political correctness? Gosh, we're so worried about offending somebody. And if I'm going to have pride in my disability, why shouldn't it be a focal point? So there are some individuals who believe identify first language is really the way to go. So if I use a wheel chair, call me a wheel chair user. Okay? If I'm blind, don't say I'm a person who can't see, say I'm a blind person. And some of that is tied to culture. Okay?

 We hear this very strongly from individuals who are blind and from the deaf community that said, you know what? I did grow up differently. I did learn differently. I did connect with my world differently. It is indeed a culture. And so it's an interesting conversation to have because some of that comes down to language. When I talk with some individuals who ‑‑ who can't see or who can't hear and I talk about culture, they say that was my culture. Okay? Like them having to deal with how I communicated with those. So I just wanted to throw that out for discussion because again, as representatives of the movement, that's something we're going to hear come up again. So what are your thoughts when you hear that kind of ‑‑ that kind of validation?
 >> For me, because I've always dealt with young families that are newly diagnosed, it's always irked me when I hear young children being referred to special needs children because those children are children first, and they happen to have a special need or a disability. As I hear you speak, we always talk about the ‑‑ the independent living movement being informing and educating. I'm sitting here thinking, you know, how can we really take that on? How can we help those, especially the younger families? And children and youth? To be able to ‑‑ to know what that is. To be able to help them soon be self‑advocates to then mentor other people to know what that is. So when ‑‑ when you hear that term being ‑‑ you even hear it professionally, you know, you have some professionals that will ‑‑ will not use person first language. Be able to nicely have that discussion and call it to the front because it's all about us promoting self‑advocacy and look at the person first, not their disability.
 >> What about ‑‑ what starts with a V? Victoria? Virginia?
 >> Victoria.
 >> What about doing like a public service announcement? An ad campaign or something? Do we have that ‑‑ that would be great. About person first language, you know, just kind of like do ‑‑ I don't know ‑‑ in anticipation of a big date, you know, maybe planning ahead in advance of next ‑‑ the next ADA celebration or the next legislative day. Or even like I'm like visualizing like award cloud with all these terms, these person first centered terms ‑‑ you know what a word cloud is, right?
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> You could do that and then the dates of all the upcoming like common disability agenda forums, and you could make like a poster like in a JPEG and PDF and blast it on social media. You know, television's much more expensive but maybe we do like a partnering with other organizations, do like a PSA, like a public service campaign and, you know, get really creative. Yeah.
 >> You know, I have ‑‑ I am a gardener. I am not my disability.
 >> Right. Right.
 >> I think those are really cool ideas. At the same time, I ‑‑ the question I think we're being asked is more about how we're relating.
 >> Right. That's what ‑‑
 >> So I guess I more want to make sure that we as a ‑‑ I ‑‑ I'm just curious about how we as a council view disability culture or the culture of disability or person first or the right to call myself whatever I want to call myself. You know?
 >> Right.
 >> Or don't label me. I don't want to be labeled at all. There's those kinds of notions that we kick around. There's some confusion within them.
 >> And that's because we're people and like you said, may identify ourselves differently. People have hidden disabilities that nobody would know unless they chose to share.
 >> Both I guess considered blind but we're not the same. I mean, I have some sight. He may not have as much as I do. You know? I mean, we're ‑‑ we all might represent the same population but not necessarily. I mean, I guess I look at it as just a characteristic of who I am. It doesn't define me. Not the first thing I would say to you when I meet you. I would say my name is Lisa. You know? And today, I'm going to say I work for the bureau of services for blind persons. Tomorrow I am going to say I'm Ellie's mom because I'm in a soft ball tournament. You know?
 >> I personally struggle ‑‑ I personally struggle with the notion of having to celebrate the fact that I have a disability. Some groups have said ‑‑ because I have a mental illness and I don't celebrate it. It's a pain in the butt to have a mental illness, and I don't often talk about it publicly because if I talk ‑‑ talk about it, I am sharing some very intimate things that even my own family doesn't know about myself.
 >> And drawing attention you don't necessarily want.
 >> I don't want to be defined as a person with a mental illness. I want to be defined as Sara Grivetti. That's just where my confusion comes in sometimes.
 >> Some of us with disabilities that you can see them or hear them, whatever, you know, we don't get the luxury of ‑‑ you know what I mean?
 >> Right.
 >> But yet in the same token, I'm with you. Like I don't necessarily ‑‑ I'm not going to Ellie's soft ball tournament to talk about that.
 >> Right. It's not how I define myself.
 >> I'm really not. When I am not at work, I don't want to talk about it at all.
 >> Yeah.
 >> In the community, they know you and ‑‑
 >> Like ‑‑
 >> So like yesterday ‑‑
 >> Sorry.
 >> I was at ‑‑ I was at a store and just, you know, regular routine.
 >> Minding your business.
 >> And ‑‑ and ‑‑ and here comes someone calling my name. You know me. I know you. And they proceeded to talk about work.

 (Laughter)
 >> I'm really at the store.
 >> I said please call me tomorrow.
 >> I'm so sorry.
 >> Sorry.
 >> I think that we have to think in terms of like ‑‑ of contact first when we're talking about these sort of issues. I don't want like anything that I say like on social media to get taken out of context. Or anything I personally say to be taken out of context. I ‑‑ I think the context piece is probably the most important piece of all of this. So how do we make sure we get our message across in the appropriate way?
 >> I have two things I want to say about this. I act on the presumption that all of us on the council, person first language is kind of instinctive for us and if not, it really ought to be. And ‑‑ and the other thing that I want to know is I'm curious, I'm wondering if maybe our messages haven't been maybe ‑‑ and I don't mean our, the council, I mean as a disability community ‑‑ have been all that successful in getting out because as ‑‑ as a community, A, I don't know that is there really a disability community if we're all individuals, right? And either want to share or don't want to share our disability with the world. It's a choice to even say I want to be part of the disability community and within the community, this is something I've noticed for years. So my daughter had a severe form of cerebral palsy, and I'm not sure that she would have ever developed kind of the verbal skills to kind of be able to express herself in ‑‑ in ‑‑ in a very high‑executive level functioning sort of way. I don't know. I always noticed because CP, there's such a spectrum from mild to profound that I always got the sense that people with a very mild or moderate case of cerebral palsy didn't necessarily want to recognize that if not by the grace of God, they may have had a profound case of cerebral palsy and might not have been as functional so to speak as they were. And that they didn't really see themselves as we're all one community, like those of us with CP, you know, whether mild or severe, we're one community and we all have to have each other's backs and look out for each other. What's good for me, I want it for you too. And I continue to stay involved in those. There is a CP chat now chat ‑‑ weekly chat on Twitter and, you know, I love listening to ‑‑ it's now like young ‑‑ young people who are kind of trying to figure out what they're going to do after college and can they get a job? And what dating is like and like all of these, you know, problems. But I don't always see that they're ‑‑ that the concern is there. And because everyone is so kind of self‑interested and that's okay and they have their own struggles but I don't see that there's necessarily this feeling that those of us with CP are one community, and I have to look out for my brothers. So, you know, I don't know what it's like for the MS community or muscular dystrophy community or spina bifida, if they feel that they're part of the disabled community and they have an obligation to say yes, I am part of this community, and there are those of us who need more services and we're all one. So if that's not happening, I could see where there could be kind of difficulties in getting kind of a united, coherent message across to those who don't have any idea or notion of what it is.
 >> I think there are some individuals ‑‑ and I hear what you are saying about it's nice for me to hear if individuals have a like disability but do we come together and fight for a common cause? Maybe. Maybe not. There are some individuals who don't come together with individuals with like disabilities and that is a very personal choice. But in this movement, we are working together, moving forward to ‑‑ to advocate. And I think how we do that and Alex's point is well taken. We have very different conversations on a Saturday night with our friends than we do Monday morning with our boss.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> And that's appropriate but we need again to be intentional about that. Recently, we've had comments, feedback, from both council members and members working out professionally in the network about language they've used that hasn't been person first. And for those of us who ‑‑ who ‑‑ or from people I hear who expect it, it's cringe worthy. It's hurtful to what we're trying to move forward, and so I just wanted to bring that discussion up so again, we could bring it to the forefront of our mind. I agree, individuals, you can call yourself whatever you want. Right? If I choose to refer to myself in a fashion and I own that term, that's my choice. But as part of moving the movement forward, if my calling is to empower people and I, you know, whether we like it or not, I still when I go out in the community and talk about disability, I still see stigma. Okay. So I ‑‑ I feel like part of my job is to point out that empowerment, that value piece that maybe some folks haven't ‑‑ haven't experienced yet or haven't considered yet or don't believe yet or whatever.

 The other side of that argument is that is exactly why we should highlight disability. The less that stigma will exist. I appreciate both sides of that discussion but ‑‑ go ahead, Rebecca.
 >> Yeah. So I just wanted to kind of chime in on this whole topic. It's really interesting listening to everybody's different like views and comments and things like that, and as somebody with a disability that's very visible, I can't really hide my disability so it's just part of me. So this whole issue of person first language versus saying like special needs person or whatever, I can see both sides of it. On the one hand, person first is empowering and focuses on the person, not the disability. But then on the flip side, the other way of talking about it could also be seen as like empowering and encouraging because it's getting the person with the disability to like accept and be proud of their situation.

 I know some people like feel very strongly one way or the other. But I think as an adult with a disability, I think ‑‑ I can ‑‑ I can go either way. I think generally person first language would be better. But I can definitely see why the other phrasing is important. I just wanted to like add in that insight. And then I think this wasn't really touched on but one thing I've noticed is that sometimes people with disabilities like to modify certain words to make them more positive. Like I know somebody that instead of saying disability, says diff ability. So diff ability instead of disability. Some people love that because they think it's encouraging and empowering. But to me, it's kind of hard because it just draws attention to the fact that it is different. So I think that word choice is really important because it does have power, and I think sometimes people focus too heavily on the specific wording instead of thinking about the situation or whatever.
 >> Robin: Yeah. Thank you for that. We need to go ahead and move on. But I think that we will move on with the understanding of that being at the forefront in terms of how we're representing the independent living movement, as Terri said. So we will ‑‑ thanks for that discussion. Let's move on to employment first updates with Sara.
 >> Sara: All right. The recommendations for employment first were included in your packets. I'm certainly not going to go through it in depth. But just to ‑‑ to take you guys back a little bit, the employment first essentially was an executive order that was issued by the governor to raise the bar around employment for individuals with disabilities by focusing on community‑based employment over any type of facility‑based employment.

 And the notion of employment first typically is ‑‑ well, somewhat different but it is synonymous with competitive integrated ‑‑ or I'm sorry, competitive wages as well. So the last meeting I reported to you about the recommendation that Todd Culver from Morrow, the DD council, and myself had made to the lieutenant governor based on his request of us to come up with some recommendations. Once we presented those to him, he asked us to develop some enhanced recommendations. So we had given him pretty high‑level types of thought. Talking more about the national models for employment first. The state is a recipient of employment first state leadership mentoring grant, which BSBP's been a part of that, MRS has been part of, Morrow, department of education, behavioral health and developmental disability authority ‑‑ or administration. So a number of people have been working on this grant and receiving national experts and guiding us for the last couple years.

 So all this is kind of coming together to ‑‑ we know ‑‑ everybody knows we want it. It's going to happen. It's a matter of now, the ‑‑ the devil's in the details to make this happen. That's where we pull together expertise and presented the enhanced recommendations, which are included in your packet. And the last meeting we had with the lieutenant governor, essentially the next step we determined to have happen is taking these recommendations and sharing them with state leadership that has the ability to implement the recommendations. So we're coming at it from an advocacy perspective that we know with WIOA, we've got to meet the regulations around competitive, integrated employment. We know with the community‑based rules that CNS has issued that community first is ‑‑ is the desired avenue. Fun music. All right. Spice it up. We ‑‑ you know, so we know what ‑‑ we know driving this. When we talk about culture and disability culture and how stigma is eradicated, one of the best ways to eradicate stigma is for people to have contact with people with disabilities on an equal playing field. That's what the research shows. So if you want to eradicate stigma, you have to move people who are in these segregated settings out of those settings, out into the community working side by side with people without disabilities so that you are all on an equal level playing field. Basically, that's the contact theory. It has proven to reduce stigma.

 So what I ‑‑ what I get nervous about hearing and this is where I'm so excited about the state level leadership meeting, what I get nervous about hearing is what Terri was just sharing earlier. About how people are being displaced from their current jobs because we don't have enough guidance about how to implement employment first and the community base rules and WIOA regarding competitive employment. We've got agencies at the local level, community‑based level, that think they're doing what they're supposed to be doing. Not saying they're not but what I'm saying is there needs to be more guidance from the state on how to do this so that there's no unintended consequences and people are unemployed who have been employed for years.

 So ‑‑ so the ‑‑ really, the issues around implementing this, the recommendations have been focused on capacity building, statewide capacity building around training and retooling the workforce. That helps people with disabilities to think about community‑based employment from a different perspective as a primary perspective. And to learn how to work in a setting that's focused more on community‑based employment versus group ‑‑ or group and facility‑based employment. Part of the provider transformation process. So there's a number of community rehabilitation organizations in our state that have been operating under one business model for countless numbers of years that now have to transform their business model, and that doesn't happen over night. So that provider transformation process has been ongoing as part of this office of disability employment policy grant, the ODEP grant, and we need to do provider transformation. Several community organizations have shifted their business model through ‑‑ through the work of the subject matter experts. Restructuring has to occur. So the majority of support that are provided to individuals with developmental disabilities or serious mental illness that are provided in a facility‑based setting, those supports are paid for by Medicaid dollars. The funding has to be ‑‑ the ‑‑ the rates need to be restructured to incentivize community based employment. It's cheaper to provide in a closed setting than it would be in individual employers ‑‑ with individual employers. So the rates need to be restructured to drive that. There needs to be more emphasis on the youth. So we have a school‑to‑work element in here. Employer engagement. Of course we can prepare people to work in the community, but we need to increase the demand. So we need to have more employers engaged. We've done great efforts with lieutenant governor with his hidden talent tour over the last few years. Multiple efforts CILs have taken. Community organizations. Michigan Rehabilitation Services. Bureau of services for blind persons. We all engage with employers. So building a cohesive process where we are doing a much better job of engaging with employers.

 Outreach to families and communities. So like if Terri's going out and talking to communities, people within those communities, as the CMHs are implementing changes, there are ‑‑ there is a pocket of people emerging that has been highly concerned that they're going to be unemployed, which is proven in a couple cases. That the community rehab organization their child has gone to, their adult child has gone to 35 to 40 years in some cases because that is the only place they know and they love going there, these are their words, that they understand that some of these options are going to be changing. So there's a lot of fear. So the community education outreach needs to occur. Benefits coordination and planning is a huge element of this. So the CILs, like Kellie was talking about, offer certified benefits coordination counselors. We've got a number of CILs that do that. There's community rehab organizations that do it. VR agencies, MRS, and BSBP do it as well. Making sure people understand the impact of employment under benefits and ‑‑ and also make sure there's that safety net built in there.

 So those are all the elements that are in the ‑‑ this advanced document with the recommendation that we are going to share with all the state leaders. When I say state leaders, I'm talking about Linda Zeller, director of behavioral health and ‑‑ is that what the H stands for? Bureau of services for blind persons. Bill Robinson and his team. Suzanne Howell and her team. Department of education. Rodney and Robin and I will be there on behalf of SILC. Todd Culver. Then director of the DD council, Vendella Collins. Lieutenant governor's office will be there.
 >> Is this the June 1st event?
 >> Yeah. Yeah, the June 1st meeting. So one thing ‑‑ you know, from an advocate's perspective, we want to be very sensitive to the ‑‑ the actual implemencation of these changes that we're asking for may take time but we feel like we need to ‑‑ we need to drive these. And we are more concerned about get ‑‑ making ‑‑ getting this ‑‑ getting this moving. That's our top priority is getting this moving. So I'm really happy with the progress we've made so far.
 >> Can I ask a question?
 >> Sure.
 >> It may just be a conceptual question but there is lots of reference or has been reference to the braiding.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> I'm just curious about how that ‑‑ you know, because when I read it, I ‑‑ we all ‑‑ and as you've noted, we all have our VR heads that are funding. Right? Everybody's got their pot.
 >> Yep.
 >> And we're going to do what we need to do, and they're going to do what they need to do. So tell me about what ‑‑ is that a conceptual piece for you? What does that mean?
 >> Well, it's a conceptual piece at least for Michigan at this point. It is a reality for other states.
 >> Okay. So what's that reality look like?
 >> The reality, from what we understand ‑‑ we continue to research this ‑‑ is for example, the individual that has ‑‑ that is currently in a facility and all their services and supports are being funded by Medicaid.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> And yet they want to get a job.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> So the question is why aren't they working with BSBP or MRS? Depending if they've got a dual disability and blindness is one of them. So why aren't they working with MRS or BSBP for employment support? And if they were and a case was referred to them and they still need skill development, why not use the Medicaid funds to pay for skill development instead of the VR funds to pay for skill development?
 >> That's sort of where I was going with it.
 >> Yeah.
 >> Yeah.
 >> As you know, from a counselor perspective, it takes a lot of coordination. But it also has the ability to expand the resources in a more coordinated way.
 >> Right.
 >> From a counseling perspective, it might look like you're actually putting funds ‑‑ you know what I mean? Like so this is more of a concept of sharing resources.
 >> Yeah.
 >> Not necessarily of BSBP putting X amount of dollars into a pot it's about us using existing resources and braiding all these ropes together to make a stronger alliance.
 >> If you were to sit down and you were ‑‑ you were to participate in a person‑centered plan, and the facilitator helps the individual with the disability identify employment as one of their goals, and let's just say they are currently working in a facility‑based setting.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> And you happen to be at the meeting, Lisa, as the counselor.
 >> Right.
 >> You could say listen, you know, this is where ‑‑ this is where our part of this could work to help that individual reach their goals. As a supports coordinator from CMH could say, well, you know, we could do this and this and help with skill development and then hey, once they get the job and you close them, well, we could pay for the long‑term support.
 >> I got ya.
 >> So in a true person centered fashion, that's where you start looking at how you can integrate services and supports without ‑‑ you're right ‑‑ throwing money into a pot and mixing funds and getting convoluted.
 >> Right. And having a conversation with folks who are more budget cut, you know, the braiding thing is challenging.

 (Laughter)
 >> I get it from a conceptual view. I'm all there. You know? I've been rehab for a long time. But ‑‑ but from the spread sheet guides, they're like what is this?
 >> And of course there is always a concern on duplication of services.
 >> Yeah. Yeah.
 >> The ‑‑ of course, you've got the ‑‑ I forget the concept. Is it comparable ‑‑ comparable benefits?
 >> Right.
 >> So if you can get it somewhere for low ‑‑ lower cost.
 >> Some of those resources like Medicare, Medicaid, are comparable benefits.
 >> Right. I would say employment supports being in two different silos. One is Medicaid funded and one is VR funded. To blend those in a way that ‑‑
 >> Makes more sense.
 >> Makes the whole system more efficient. And I ‑‑ I've ‑‑ any questions?
 >> It is ‑‑ it is ‑‑ it is one thing to have programs and situations in place to provide trainings and education for anybody seeking employment. The person ultimately already has knowledge, skills, and abilities to do whatever they're wanting to do. The number one issue is in order to maintain a quality of life and maintain our ability to go to work and to go to the job at work and maintain benefits, of course we have ‑‑ we have to incur the Medicaid financial limitations of not being able to make enough money to eventually get off of benefit programs that help us get our ‑‑ our ‑‑ our services.

 So it's ‑‑ I don't really think it's ‑‑ it's great to train. It's great to give feedback. It's great to have all these peer people involved to give people the skills. But ultimately, if you already have the skills, unless they changed the funding of how the federal government sees individuals with disabilities, then we're not really solving any issues.
 >> That's a good point, Aaron.
 >> I believe, Alex, do you have a comment?
 >> I 100% agree with Aaron there.
 >> Did you have a comment?
 >> First of all, it's going to take all of these solutions, so don't give focus on any one of them. But the one thing I would like to see being talked a whole lot more about in this arena is how we, as people with disabilities, can put some stress, put some advocacy, even within ourselves start to look at what I would call for lack of a better word the project driven or side hustle mentality, right? Where ‑‑ where, you know, sure you have to have something to keep yourself alive. But ‑‑ but also this idea that we are not ‑‑ not that somebody's creating this pool of jobs for us anymore because ‑‑ because jobs for us anymore don't work in our community. There's ‑‑ there's not an employer that comes to town and says I'm going to employ you your career. Doesn't exist anymore and they'll never exist again.

 So I don't know whether we push BSBP services or those services or we push within ourselves or whatever source but say we're ready to build our own businesses. Right? We're going to take that because if we don't, we're always going to end up on the bad side of some other business enterprise. Somebody else's dream. Right? And just like everybody who doesn't make a living wage now will be there. So I'm ‑‑ I'm just saying the people in this room, to say start being really good at what you do, and start figuring out how you can do it for yourself or with ‑‑ with three other people with disabilities. Right? Figure that out. We're going to need all of this.
 >> Right.
 >> We're going to need all of this. So pick one and work your ass off. I don't know if that's a policy or not, right?

 (Laughter)
 >> What I think ‑‑ I think ‑‑ I think until you gather that mentality, it's going to be really hard to sit and wait. Right? So that's my ‑‑
 >> I think that's why it's so important of what Lisa was talking about, to start transition at 14.
 >> Absolutely.
 >> And you start looking at what is best practice? And best practice is no longer anymore, you know, what college you're going to go to. What's industrial trade? It's what are your hopes and dreams? What are your skills already? You can look at entrepreneurial-ship and starting what you like to do and making a living at it. And I think it's going to take the recommendations that you are all looking at, also including that into one of them. Because it's not going to be, you know, going to a nine to five job. It's not going to be reporting to a certain automotive factory. And it's not going to be cookie cutter.
 >> Yep.
 >> Nor should it be.
 >> No. It's going to have to be by seat and individual person. And even though we may have the same disability or live in the same community or anything like that, it's not going to be the same because we all don't have the same interests or the same hopes and the same dreams.
 >> And that's true for everyone, whether you have a disability or not.
 >> Right.
 >> You know what I mean?
 >> And I think this discussion ‑‑ some may think that, you know, it doesn't fit. I think it more than fits. I think the more of us that can echo it as advocates in those high‑level meetings need to because I ‑‑ I ‑‑ I think sometimes when we go to ‑‑ to the higher level meetings, we ‑‑ we look at practicalities. We look at the ABCs. And this isn't ABCs. This is all about individuals with disabilities earning a living, a productive living based on what they need. Otherwise, like what Aaron said, you're going to be unemployed. Then looking at the fact of ‑‑ and ‑‑ and the discussion you all had earlier, I just sat here and I'm so glad that the younger folks are here because, you know, they have the conversation about support of getting them to work. That is another thing that really needs to be looked at in those higher level meetings and individualizing and making sure they have the supports. And it's not going to fit in the box that we've always operated under because it's no longer a box.
 >> Okay. I just want to point out that at 2:00, in seven minutes, we have public comment and we have two more ‑‑ two more things to be talked about on the agenda before that. So if everyone's okay with that, we're going to move on to the next thing.
 >> Robin: Terri, do you want to talk really quick?
 >> Certainly. We had agreed to host a strategy session to address how to create or enhance inclusive and accessible community. We did some preplanning to figure out what that might look like and chose to bring a facilitator in at the end of April. Just like we have some group specializing in employment, the feel of the group was that CIL's really specialized in accessibility. So we pulled together many reps from that world. We had ten CILs represented and three council members attend that session as well. We really highlighted four areas of focus moving forward. And so we're likely going to have some action groups that come out of that day. The four areas were looking at the construction code and enforcement of the ADA accessibility guidelines. We wanted to take a look at what is the consumer experience? What are people ‑‑ what's happening in communities? What do we need to fix? Et cetera. In regard to accessibility and inclusion. We wanted to increase the expertise among skills. We don't have equity in expertise currently so we are looking to get that. Aaron talked about consistency this morning. So making sure when somebody calls the CIL, there's somebody there that can answer those questions for them.

 Then we also focused on a fourth area regarding marketing. If we truly ‑‑ CILs truly are the experts in accessibility, how do we get that word out? So there is a group that will be focusing on that as well. Those were the primary four areas. There are several tactics that came under each of those, so those groups will ‑‑ probably more than one group. But that group will reconvene shortly.
 >> Can I just ask ‑‑ I would like to say this when you speak about marketing that ‑‑ make that ‑‑ I'm just throwing this out. But make that like a five‑sentence approach in some level. Maybe not now but ‑‑
 >> Maybe.
 >> Maybe. You know? But because when I heard someone talk about media blast and JPG, like you know what? You left out a whole ‑‑
 >> You're right. I did.
 >> Someone who can't see and can't read. Then of course if you do PSA, we have people who can't hear. And I am not saying you shouldn't do those things. You know? I can say some things and I like looking at them. So ‑‑ but, you know, your bill boards. I didn't know they were there unless someone told me. When you look at marketing, just try to give that a really 3D approach.
 >> Good perspective, Lisa.
 >> That's a good idea. Yes. Thank you for that input.
 >> Robin: Is there anybody on the phone who wants to ‑‑ Rebecca, I believe you are the only council member on the phone. Is there anything you want to add to this discussion?
 >> I don't think so. Nope.
 >> Robin: All right. I just want to make sure I was including you and keeping ‑‑ keeping you in the forefront of our minds here. So I guess it is left up to me. I have three minutes. Oh, no.

 I and Rodney and Sara have a meeting with lieutenant governor Calley on Tuesday of ‑‑ of this week, and I mean extremely impressive slash intimidating for me. Being the first, you know, time with like a governor or lieutenant governor type person of authority and position. I thought it went extremely well. He ‑‑ he was very open to what we had to say. Very open to hear about what the council ‑‑ what we could help him with, with any questions he might have about the different initiatives he's working on or realms that he's moving in. But also, adding to maybe didn't know about this or how about we tell you about that? Or ‑‑ I was able to give him some personal information about the transportation issue that we've been sharing here and how it personally has affected me, and we ‑‑ we got some very good feedback from him about ‑‑ that really shows that is something that is on the forefront of his mind. Making ‑‑ making sure that that is included in the work that he's doing and the different implementations he's looking at for employment first. And Rodney and Sara were also there, so I'll let you guys add anything else you want to in the next minute.
 >> I was just going to say the only thing that ‑‑ that jumped out at me that we might want to take a closer look at is we looked forward to SPIL development in the future is the ‑‑ the efforts to help individuals that are incarcerated with their mental health and issues, how that's been a big challenge. Another is the opioid epidemic we have here in Michigan is a priority of his. And those are a couple things that jumped out. I fully suspect that on May 30th, he'll be announcing ‑‑ that he's going to be running for governor. He would likely go up against Shudy in the primary. So on ‑‑ on the Republican side of that. So he's a good ally to people with disabilities. He doesn't always fully understand everything but he's one ‑‑ he's the first person on the governor's administration I have ever met that has wanted to learn, is open minded, uses his own experience to grow, but also learns from other people's experiences. And so he's grown in his knowledge over the last couple years significantly.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Sara. All right. It is 2:01. So we will go ahead and start our public comment. I will read the public comment policy statement. Members of the public who wish to speak will be called on by the chairperson. You will be allowed five minutes as an individual and seven minutes if you are the designated representative of a group. The public must address the council and not utilize this time to engage in dialogue with members of the council. During breaks, we will have the opportunity to meet and engage in such dialogue. Members of the public are requested to refrain from repetitious comment during this portion of the agenda. So do I have any members of the public on the phone who wish to give public comment?
 >> Yes.
 >> Robin: All right. Go ahead whenever you're ready.
 >> Joel Harcz. Citizen who happens to be blind and who happens to be deeply disgusted with the lack of access in this state, which I documented over and over again. Didn't even hear about this accessibility meeting. That's one. But 40 years ago, Judy, Ed Roberts, and others, had to take over the federal buildings and fight for the implementation of section 504 and also led to the creation of title 7 funding independent living movement. And yet, now ‑‑ and the main goal of that was to have complete access, nondiscrimination, and to have integration in our communities and the world and that includes employment. Now, we have the dog and pony show years later of ‑‑ of completely segregated employment. The core mission is community transition and community integration. That's what this agency ‑‑ or this institution ‑‑ should be talking about.

 This employment first dog and pony show is just to create and help out the CROs. A point in order on this, the very first meeting ‑‑ the very first meeting on this common disability agenda was scheduled at SBRC services, a sheltered workshop. Ladies and gentlemen, the fundamental thing is deinstitutionalize people and that includes in a work setting. You don't change those things by ‑‑ by maintaining the status quo. As ‑‑ as to regard to the Lieutenant Governor Calley, I'll tell you for one, this is going to be a person who ‑‑ who is going to oppose at every, every level. His climbing into the governor's show. We've had every ‑‑ under this administration, we've had each and every entity, including the SILC, destroyed from a consumer input ‑‑ even input, even being at the table standard. We've had the Michigan commission for the blind abolished with all its powers and authorities. We've had quality control council abolished. We've had the SRC reorganized and ‑‑ and ‑‑ and virtually abolished. In this world with all kinds of conflicts of interest involved, including the CROs at the table. We've had the SILC abolished in effect over and over again and that also goes, by the way, back to the very basics. The 25th anniversary of the Americans With Disabilities Act where lieutenant governor Calley stood and watched from the podium with a bunch of other mostly nondisabled people, while physical barriers and police ‑‑ police presence were used to bar people with disabilities. Passing out leaf‑lets. That, ladies and gentlemen, is a hideous assault upon our fundamental civil rights. Our constitutionally‑derived rights to peaceably assemble and address our grievances to our government. We have also had this SILC and other agencies play dog and pony shows without transparency and have closed‑door meetings over and over again on matters of public policy that affect us.

 Ladies and gentlemen, nothing abolished without us. Let's go to people first language. It isn't just a matter of language that the IL movement is supposed to be made up of people with disabilities speaking for themselves. And if people want to hide their disability and yet garner the benefits, more power to them. But don't make those of us who have no capability to hide that and ‑‑ to swallow your gunk. And also, going back to employment first and WIOA, it is illegal under WIOA to use title I money, VR funds, to put people into segregated settings. That includes enclaves and that includes being used.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Joe, for your comment. That's time.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> Robin: Do we have anybody else on the phone? Members of public wishing to give comment?
 >> Yes, I would.
 >> Robin: All right. Go ahead whenever you're ready, Eleanor.
 >> Eleanor Cantor. Consumer. Muskegon, Michigan. I am going to be discussing the SILC's recent letter to the lieutenant governor regarding employment first. First, Sara Grivetti needs to disclose conflicts of interest before requesting funds on behalf of the public that benefit her personally and professionally. It is not appropriate for Ms. Grivetti to use her position on the SILC to direct funds to her employer. This has been an ongoing problem for several years. The title of this comment is blending and braiding. A scam to bypass WIOA regulations. The state of Michigan is desperate to find a way to continue funding sheltered workshops despite new regulations. In partnership with Michigan's association of sheltered workshops, Marow, has submitted details and shocking proposal to the governor's office. The authors of this document provided a chart demonstrating how the state can maintain the illusion of compliance while continuing the pipeline of Michiganders with disabilities to subminimum wage jobs. This graphic demonstrates how can move from agency to agency for 90 days, collecting every fee they can, with no identified outcome other than a closed case and quote ongoing support provided by Medicaid. Translation. They intend to continue ‑‑ misusing Medicaid dollars to fund sheltered workshops and to commingle those dollars with vocational rehabilitation funds, which expressly cannot be used to fund sheltered workshops. The Medicaid funds in question are to be used only to provide skill building assistance in the community according to the Michigan Medicaid provider manual. WIOA, the use of ‑‑ and nonintegrated entities. The SILC's proposal outlines how the state can blend and braid funding streams so that it can continue to collect federal dollars while engaging in activities that are not allowable with those funds. The money gets passed from one organization to the next to the next until no one can understand its original intent or requirements.

 Blending is a strategy to obscure the source of funding that has specific requirements. Money is transferred from the state to private nonprofits so that it can no longer be tracked by the public. Blending will provide Michigan Rehabilitation Services needs to mislead federal regulators. Braiding, a strategy in which separate funding streams are brought together to pay for more than one funding stream can support, then pulled back apart to report to funders how the money was spent. Braiding requires strict financial and programmatic over sight to ensure state and federal dollars are spent only on allowable activities. Braiding requires to act in good faith, with transparency and honesty. It is not to be ‑‑
 >> Good faith efforts follow the law. Michigan Rehabilitation Services. Michigan centers for independent living. Disability network. Michigan SILC. Sheltered workshop s. And the governor's office are doing everything they can to maintain the status quo. Blending and braiding does nothing to benefit Michiganders with disabilities. This absurd proposal are sheltered workshops and their partner. One major question remains unanswered. Why have sheltered workshops and their partners been given control over implementing first? It is a huge conflict of interest. Carried out with the transparency necessary ‑‑
 >> Robin: Thanks very much, Eleanor. All right. Is there anyone else on the phone wishing to give public comment?
 >> Robin, this is Darma Cantor. I e‑mailed a comment. Is it possible that somebody can read that?
 >> Robin: Let me ‑‑
 >> I can read it at your direction.
 >> Robin: Yes. Yes, they can, Darma.
 >> Thank you.
 >> Land of trump should have dominated your meeting. As a community, we must stand up and speak out. Disregard for the rights of Americans with disabilities is back in vogue. The secretary of education and Supreme Court justice do not recognize your need for or right to a public education. The secretary of health and human services says he wants to give control back to the patient by eliminating federal ‑‑ federal regulations on the quote burden doctors. The director of homeland security said we should support immigration enforcement or shut out. Cutting Medicaid $800 billion over ten years in caps on benefit. This is an ‑‑ in‑home supports and institutions. Laws currently proposed in congress that would enable the right of disabled Americans to ‑‑ that are still out of compliance with nondiscrimination requirements from the DAD. The fight is on. We, the disabled, must present an active and articulate political position in our interest. We are proud of our advocacy and continue to demand equal access in education and employment, access to housing and health services and supports. We must be treated with value and respect as full members of our society.

 I wrote that before today's meeting packet, which demonstrated a top down funding driven decision making that has marginalized us for a decade. Has been quote nothing without us ‑‑ about us without us end quote. Yet three paid professionals who are employed by agencies benefitting financially from the proposed plan have claimed the right to speak for us. This violates our most basic principle, consumers leading design of IL programs and the services they rely on. IL is not VR. It is a separate title in the act because it is not the same mission. We do not have the same goals. We do not have the same methods. Employment is not IL. Independence and self‑determination are surely enhanced by employment income but that is for the individual consumer to choose as a personal goal. It should not be shoved down our throats to justify our existence and benefits corporations like MAROW. Plan is a model that promotes the interest of organizations and employees without benefits to consumers. It is another plan to pass money from tax payers to businesses, completely excluding consumers from directing the goal plan or implementation. Plan says quote investment is required to build a skilled community of service practitioners across the state end quote. How many times a consumer is going to watch the money, consumer directed goals be allocated for the benefit of professional systems. By law, the SILC composition is majority disabled citizens not employed by the state or CIL network. Why are you silent? Engaged in defending our right as citizens and our IL right to be self‑determined individually and as a movement. That's the end.
 >> Robin: All right. Is there any other member of the public on the phone wishing to give comment? All right. Is there anyone in the room wishing to give public comment? All right. You have five minutes.
 >> It won't take long. I am Kellie Winn, as I said. I'm executive director of ‑‑ I am a person with a disability. I don't say that often. I just want to say, Terri, I absolutely enjoyed your talk on person first language. It is something that I want to take back to the center. Actually, I'm probably going to contact you to bring some more information back. This is the first time I've sat in this SILC meeting. I've enjoyed it. I think you guys do an awesome job. Thanks for all your hard work. Thank you, guys. And thanks for having me here.
 >> Thanks for coming, Kellie.
 >> Robin: Is there anybody else?
 >> In regards to the wording on whether ‑‑ wording or whatever ‑‑ to me, personally, doesn't really matter what wording you use because it all depends on your frame of reference and where you're coming from as an individual. Myself, I can't hide my disability. I have no problem talking about my disability. I wish more people would come up and ask me what my disability is, rather than wonder or gawk or whatever among themselves. It's ‑‑ to me, it's all about education and educating the individuals about disabilities and letting people know that just because you have a disability, it doesn't have to define you. And if we can do that, it doesn't matter what language we use, what ‑‑ yes, words are important. But the meaning behind our cause is what's more important. As long as we can get that across, it lets people know that your disability doesn't have to define you, whether you want to hide it, show it, whatever it may be. It doesn't really matter as long as you don't let your disability define you.
 >> Robin: Thank you. Anybody else? Thanks.
 >> We do need to go back and do the MRS report.
 >> Robin: Yes, I was just about to say. We have Bill here from MRS and he is ready to give us ‑‑
 >> Yes. Could not make it today so you have a more poor substitute in her place. A couple things that are very short that she just wanted me to bring up here. She wanted me to talk about the lieutenant governor's conference on talent here. She considers it very successful. Approximately, 120 businesses attended plus a couple athletes. Jim Abbott if you remember him. She believes that the entire conference was very successful. Another thing she wanted to bring out was she is diligently working in several different aspects on the systems, electronic systems that impact CILs. She'll continue to do that. Last thing she wanted me to talk about is this WIOA. We are in the midst of WIOA. We were dually being trained on this. It will change the way we do business. We had several trainings on it. Outcomes and measurement tools will all be different in WIOA than we've seen before. And that's ‑‑ that's her report.
 >> Robin: Thank you. Does anyone have any questions for Bill? I think you missed the question period.
 >> Yeah.
 >> Robin: Well, thank you very much for that. We are moving on to report. I will go first with kind of bringing everybody up to speed on what's been going on with the executive committee. A big portion of our executive committee meeting back in March was the SPIL amendment and we ‑‑ we talked a lot about that. Then that was of course all changed when we got the instructions from ACL about a month after our meeting. So that would explain the committee meeting minutes in your packet. We also talked about networking opportunity for the council members which we did last night at the hotel. It was just a really nice time for us ‑‑ a few of us were there. I think ‑‑ I think we had about seven altogether. It was just a really nice thing to be able to connect as individuals. Both as individuals who have different interests and different funny stories to tell. But also, individuals who work and experience life within the disability world. Or the world of challenges and ‑‑ and barriers.

 So it was ‑‑ it was very insightful. We learned a lot about each other. I think it was a great learning experience for those of us who were able to come, and if and when we do it again, I would encourage everybody on the council to try and make it. It was really enjoyable. I don't have the report right in front of me because I closed it out. But it's like I need it in front of me to remind me.
 >> I'm the same way.

 (Laughter)
 >> Robin: We also ‑‑ Rodney, help remind me here. Is there anything else I need to ‑‑ I mean, the majority of the conversation was on the amendment process, which was ‑‑
 >> Changed.
 >> Changed. So yeah, that's ‑‑ that's really updating you on what's going on with us. So yeah, I guess we can move on to the financial report, which Mike is excused. So would you like to give that, Rodney?
 >> I can give that or if Mairead wants to speak to that. Whatever you're comfortable with.
 >> Robin: Okay.
 >> Everything looks like it's going good and then ‑‑

 (Laughter)
 >> We can stop there.
 >> There is just a couple things that are a little bit ‑‑ you know, we've gotten updated since that ‑‑ that spread sheet was made part of the package. All our grant fund payments are current from both DSEs. So we are in good position there, so everything is current. We're under ‑‑ still under budget on a great deal of the budget amounts that we have. Mostly being under. The only area that would be slightly over budget trending would be the ‑‑ the meetings themselves. The council meetings themselves. This meeting will actually put that back in line. We've ‑‑ we've saved a great deal of money with this meeting. So those will be back in line. Just some things financially to be aware of that you'll start to see in the finances as we go a little bit further forward. Some of the CDA costs will start to show up that mostly in mileage areas ‑‑ mileage was ‑‑ it was 1,030 when I got back from the UP that we had traveled that day or those couple days. So some of the mileage will start to show there.

 Again, some we have had a great deal of savings budget lines that's allowing us to do some things going forward that are going to be very impactful. We remain in good, solid financial position.
 >> Robin: Awesome. I believe that puts us on the SPIL committee. Oh, wait. Oh, we did. Because I didn't have it right in front of me. All right. So we need to ‑‑ I need a motion to accept filing those committee reports.
 >> I will make the motion.
 >> Aaron Andres.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Aaron. Oh, discussion? Okay. Hearing then, all those in favor of placing those on file, say I.
 >> I.
 >> Robin: All those opposed, say nay. All right. Those will be placed on file. So we have the staff operations report next for the second quarter, and I believe that's in our packets if we want to follow along. Rodney, you want to take it.
 >> I can take it a little bit. Most of it I think would be in the executive director report. The ‑‑ the report of staff operations is our grant compliance report that we have to file with both MRS and BSBP for the funding that we receive. So it's a little more detailed. It follows the work plan that we have with MRS and BSBP that we're responsible to report on for funding. So most of what we've talked about here is in that report. The SPIL activities, the CDA activities, the committee activities, and then the work that we would do with the net SIL database or the CIL network that is in our work plan as well. So that has been filed with both MRS and BSBP, and I could answer any specific questions or I could give a little bit more update in the collectors report. But that's the report we have for funding.
 >> Robin: How ‑‑ how are ‑‑ how is the staff doing on being able to take their weekends and evenings not answering e‑mails?
 >> Kind of depends.

 (Laughter)
 >> Robin: Well, sometimes I will think of something late at night and I will be like I'll e‑mail Rodney, you know, while I'm thinking of it then I'll be like wait a second. If I send this now, is he going to read it and then answer me at 11:30 at night? Yeah.
 >> So ‑‑
 >> You can schedule to send it Monday morning.
 >> I was going to say you can write whatever you want and schedule your outlook for 8 a.m. Monday and everything will push.
 >> Don't you wish everyone would do that?
 >> I do.
 >> I tell stories, you know, schedule to send this text or e‑mail and ‑‑ and SIRI just said something like oh, I see. She doesn't understand. So I don't know. We're having communication issues.
 >> I think the executive committee should ensure that our director and staff ‑‑ executive director should take his PTO and take a nice, long vacation this summer. Use it.
 >> Yeah.
 >> Okay. I think we can go without you for a couple weeks, Rodney.
 >> Do we get to vote on that?
 >> It's tough in my opinion.

 (Laughter)
 >> Depends where you're going.
 >> Robin: All right. We need a recommendation or motion to place on file staff operations report.
 >> I'll make it. Gabriella.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Gabriella.
 >> Sara.
 >> Robin: Thank you, Sara. All those in favor of placing on file the staff report, say I.
 >> I.
 >> Robin: Any against, say nay. All right. That will be placed on file. And we have the executive director report. Rodney? We just keep coming back to you.
 >> I can get us through this pretty quick. Most of what I had in the report, we have had a lot of conversations on today. So I'm going to try not to be too redundant. A great deal of the ‑‑ the additional information is essentially either in the SPIL report, biannual report, or the quarter report, a great deal of what we do. But I just want to say first off, thank you to ‑‑ to Terri and Tracy for all the work they've been doing. Terri's been ‑‑ I don't know how she is coordinating all these things. But she's doing a great job with that. Tracy is making sure that everything is in order in the office and also a great deal of work that rarely gets recognized or noticed unless there's some sort of small issue. So I think for all their hard work that they do with everything there.

 Really, we've been meeting monthly with the media people, and are starting to see some ‑‑ some good things with that. I went over earlier. The amount of media coverage that we have had going into this event and so forth. Most of ‑‑ are things revolved around the SPIL. Both regarding implementation and administration of the SPIL. A lot of work happened with the getting the SPIL technical amendment to the point where the council voted on it today. And there was a lot of work just pure administrative work to make sure everything was in place for that.

 Regarding one other thing we don't always talk about a great deal but our office's responsibility regarding the net SIL system. One thing is we quietly updated the entire system to new levels of software. That software is a built‑in analytics program that we can use to better take a look at the data. But that turned out to be a lot of unforeseen consequences we had to deal with there. So that is in place and working now. We also worked with the net SIL database group on a monthly basis. We visited ‑‑ DN, Wayne, blue water, disability network mid‑Michigan, capitol area. I think, Terri, you went to more than that. You went to Traverse City. So we ‑‑ we visited probably at least half the CILs. Either Terri or myself. That is our last council meeting. So again, there's ‑‑ there is ‑‑ I don't want to go down a great deal of redundancy that we have already talked about or that are in some of the other reports. But if any council members had questions of staff or staff activities, I'd be happy to answer.
 >> Robin: Any questions?
 >> How is the progress on the website?
 >> On the website as in ‑‑ that's a good question. It's ‑‑ it's coming close. We ‑‑ we now have some of the blog content. So we were waiting on getting content and things before we went into that. So probably within the next week to week and a half, you'll start so see those sections on the site will be active.
 >> Robin: What was the ‑‑ was there any sort of takeaways from your visit to the CILs?
 >> A lot of times when ‑‑ at least when I go there and Terri, if you want to speak to what you had, but at least when I go there, it's mostly centered around database training and working with the staff there. So I get a really unique perspective of seeing the staff, seeing how they work, getting the questions, kind of talking to the people that are actually doing the services. So my interaction with them usually revolves around the database data collection and so forth. I don't know if you wanted to add.
 >> They're always growing and looking for new ways to collaborate with community partners. So it's not uncommon that there's, you know, people that you don't know there that are, you know, trying to figure out something new and exciting. Or actually working in communities. So every center is a little bit different. I ‑‑ not from visiting with the centers but some meetings and conversations will echo much greater desire for supports across the state. You can begin to feel that and I think there is great value in that.
 >> Are you still meeting with Dan on a regular basis?
 >> Robin, Terri, and myself did a training with Dan. Primarily we worked with ‑‑ with Vanessa.
 >> Uh‑huh.
 >> So I get a few communications from him back and forth but primarily the media where it comes from.
 >> Do you meet with her like ‑‑
 >> We ‑‑ we meet once a month. We have a call. We develop a strategy for the month there and that's been working.
 >> Great.
 >> We started that process about two months ago and it's starting to show some good results.
 >> I went on the Facebook page and I am having ‑‑ I can't locate the clip from the Marquette newspaper. Is that what you said that ran that?
 >> Yeah.
 >> I believe it has a nice, big picture of Aaron right on the ‑‑
 >> Okay.
 >> If you're friends with me, I can share it with you.
 >> I saw the interviews that the person did like of all of us. I see that bio on there.
 >> Oh on the main web page?
 >> No, didn't you post that to Facebook too? Like meet the council member? I'll find it then if you say it's there, I'll find it.
 >> Robin: All right. Well, we are at one of my favorite points. The agenda other. So we can bring up any agenda items or ideas or theme suggestions or any ‑‑ I mean, any/other. Other is pretty broad. So does anybody have any other?
 >> I would like to possibly see more finger food. Sandwiches are a little hard ‑‑
 >> I agree. They're not the easiest for me either.
 >> Not sure how to follow finger food. With a napkin maybe.

 (Laughter)
 >> Having said that, more related just to the last part of our conversation and what Gabriella's been ‑‑ been messaging so well in terms of getting out our message, I'm wondering with ‑‑ with some of our ‑‑ our resources and moving the web ‑‑ advancing web things, I'm wondering if it's time and I don't know just by show of hands but I don't know how many people in this room listen to Podcasts. But I'm wondering if ‑‑ if this council should have a Podcast because if you look at the data regarding Podcast listenership, it's sort of going through the roof. And I think as a council member, I'd be willing to moderate, interview, work on that on a regular basis. But I think that's something we could support.
 >> Robin: Yeah. Alex was talking about that earlier.
 >> Yeah. I ‑‑ I just think that it's a ‑‑ you know, it's a ‑‑ it's a growing medium. It's something that can be consumer voiced and once it's set up, it's ‑‑ you know, it's relatively easy ‑‑ easy maintenance as long as you have somebody that's willing to, you know, sort of do the regular work of making the product. But I guess I would probably say that in my world, I get probably 30% of my information through Podcasts at this point because it's ‑‑ it's ‑‑ you can listen to it in your car or whenever you choose. On your phone. And talking about the ability to control our own story, our own message. We don't have to wait for the television station to send us a link. Right? We produce the thing and send the link. I think that's just something we ought to consider and move forward. I don't know if ‑‑ if we can vote on such a thing or ‑‑
 >> Robin: I ‑‑ I think that Alex wanted to add to that.
 >> I'd be willing to help you guys on that actually.
 >> That would be great.
 >> Jim, we already have the apple ‑‑ the itunes key connection that you need to do that.
 >> Yeah, if you go on apple news and search Michigan State wide independent, it's on apple news. That was not easy.
 >> No.
 >> If any of you don't know what they're talking about ‑‑
 >> That's a good question.
 >> I'm sending an article on this very subject.
 >> I need a little technical.
 >> On your little iPads that everybody has, there is a icon that says apple news. If you press that, there is a search function and you can type in Michigan State wide independent living council, and it is a ‑‑ well, you're an android user.

 (Laughter)
 >> The audio block iPad. It's much like talk radio. Right? So it's ‑‑ so if you look up ‑‑ if you look at ‑‑ if you look up use of social ‑‑ so I bet you they use Spotify. They use iHeart Radio, Pandora.
 >> We'll take you up on your offer.
 >> Yeah. All of that. All of that is the same way this media works.
 >> You would love my collection.

 (Laughter)
 >> I did just buy a record player though. I did. I bought one.
 >> I have one of those too. I have one eight track left.
 >> Robin: Anything else that we can confuse Terri with?
 >> I would suggest that maybe we meet at the new Oakland/Macomb building. See what they're all about. Thoughts? I don't know if that's ‑‑ it's closer than the UP.
 >> I can check with Kellie. I don't know if they have a conference room large enough but I can find out.
 >> That would have to be like a ‑‑
 >> Actually, that could be fun. I've never been up there.
 >> That's a day trip, though.
 >> That's a retreat.
 >> Can I make a motion that we adjourn?
 >> Accept motion.
 >> Robin: All right. We have a motion to adjourn. Do I have a second?
 >> Fourth.
 >> Third.
 >> You completed your agenda.
 >> Robin: That's true. But I appreciate it. So we will adjourn this meeting. Thank you, everyone.
 >> Thanks, Robin.
 >> Thanks.
 >> Bye.
 (Concludes)