**Name:** Rene Cummins

**Meeting/Conference Name:** 19th Annual SILC Congress

**Meeting Date:** January 16 -19, 2016

**Location:** Sheraton Phoenix Downtown Hotel – 340 N. 3rd St., Phoenix, AZ

**A. Lessons Learned**

**1. What are the barriers identified at this conference/meeting/event that impede individuals with disabilities from living independently in our communities.**

Since this SILC Congress largely focused on changes in the law due to Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act and the moving of SILCs to the ACL, most of the presentations were specific to these issues.

The Congress provided discussion of SILC Standards & Indicators, which were first formulated at the 2004 SILC Congress, and which are recommended for the basis of future 704 Reports.

The new SILC responsibilities for resource development and systems advocacy were discussed at length.

Also, the role of Centers in developing the state plan was thoroughly discussed, along with other changes that will affect the development of the State Plan.

**2. What are the strategies you learned at this event that will help individuals with disabilities live independently in our communities?**

Workshop on CILs, Rekindling the Romance, emphasized the partnership between the two based on factors in common, such as consumer control, peer support, likes, dislikes, etc.

These connections will contribute to developing a State Plan that will foster independent living in our communities.

A common language between CILs and SILCs is necessary, and the State Plan should include only about three (3) well-constructed goals.

**3. What strategies did you learned at this event to help reduce the stigma and discrimination that individuals with disabilities often face who want to live independently in the community?**

The workshop, Words Speak Volumes emphasized the importance of language, especially people first language.

**B. Promising Practices and Model Programs**

In the workshop sessions on SILC 101, parts 1 & 2, the importance of providing training at SILC Quarterly meetings was stressed, and it was emphasized that training is an appropriate use of Part B funds.

The assignment of SILC mentors was also emphasized. Periodic training should include IL History and Philosophy. SILC members should be familiar with the Standards & Assurances for Centers included in the law.

Currently, Part B funds are being utilized to support the coalition or association of Centers within a state. Also, Part B funds are being utilized to fund an advocacy position in each Center within the state in order to empower consumers.

The State Plan becomes part of the law in each state.

Some portion of I&E funds must go to support the State Plan.

**C. Recommendations regarding this conference to the full SILC.**

This conference did not have wide application to the full SILC since the focus was mainly on development of the next State Plan for Independent Living.

**D. Resources to share with NCSILC**

**List resources, their application, and attach collected info. If applicable.**

ILRU and SILC NET provide online resources and various archived webinars and trainings.

Rene Cummins – February 5, 2016