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House of Representatives
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Harrisburg

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MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members
FROM: Rep. Doug Reichley
SUBJECT: Cosponsor Memo—PA Council for Independent Living Funding
DATE: September 28, 2011

In Pennsylvania, there are 18 Centers for Independent Living (CILs). CILs are nonprofit community-based organizations that make a difference in the lives of those with disabilities by encouraging their achievement of independence through skill development and support services. Like most human services, CIL's are facing cutbacks and trying to provide services with less funding. At the same time, PennDOT is struggling with a handicapped placard program that has expanded beyond expectations. PennDOT issues 750,000 handicapped permits every year – at no charge to those who apply.

I will be introducing legislation on behalf of the independent living community that will solve two problems: 1) provide the independent living community with a sustainable funding source for vital programs and 2) correct abuses in the PennDOT handicapped placard program.

Specifically my proposal imposes a modest fee of \$7.50 for handicapped placards which could be renewed every three years. By requiring a renewal, we are cutting down on placard misuse and loss. In exchange, the funds collected would provide a reliable funding source for services for our disabled citizens who utilize the parking placards. Of the monies collected, eighteen percent would be directed to PennDOT to administer the placard program and enhance the Commonwealth's shared ride program for seniors, while the remaining eighty-two percent would be directed to the Pennsylvania Council on Independent Living and the 18 regional councils throughout the state to continue to provide needed services of our disabled constituents.

We have a rare opportunity to support a program that would not be supported from General Fund sources but would provide services to thousands of Pennsylvanians. The independent living community supports the idea to pay for its own placards and programs, and I ask you to join me in supporting this proposal. If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Kendra Wiederhold at 787-1000 or kwiederh@pahousegop.com.