



S.1356, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which contains Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act, has been passed out of the Senate Health Education Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee. The next step is a floor vote by the entire Senate, which is tentatively scheduled for September or October, after the August congressional recess.

During this recess, which takes place August 5 - September 6, Senators and Representatives will be in their home districts, with many of them holding town hall style events. We need our advocates to start scheduling time to make personal visits in their states, and make plans to attend these town hall events, urging Senators to reauthorize WIA and the Rehabilitation Act with included language that strengthens America's Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs).

S. 1356 calls for significant changes involving the realignment some of the critical programs that serve people with disabilities in order to provide for better coordination and collaboration across federal agencies.

Specifically, S.1356:

- Moves the Independent Living Program from the Department of Education to the Department of Health and Human Services
 - ✓ Establishes the Independent Living Administration within HHS under the Administration on Community Living
 - ✓ Moves the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) from the Department of Education to the Department of Health and Human Services and renames it the National Institute on Disability and Independent Living Research (NIDILR)
 - ✓ These changes will better coordinate and emphasize the importance of independent living and disability-related research in the agency that is best equipped to guide those efforts (HHS)

What's The Fix?

SENATE BILL 1356

Independent Living belongs to the people.

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The graphic is a white rectangular box with a green banner at the top containing the text "What's The Fix?". Below the banner, the words "SENATE BILL" are written in a small, black, sans-serif font, followed by the large number "1356" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Underneath the number, the phrase "Independent Living belongs to the people." is written in a smaller, italicized, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the box, the website address "ncil.org/rehabact" is written in a small, black, sans-serif font. The entire graphic is set against a light green background.

- The proposed changes within S. 1356 are a bipartisan effort to strengthen employment opportunities, research, and independent living services and supports for individuals with disabilities
- These transfers finally allow for individuals with disabilities to maximize their independence and ability to participate fully in all aspects of American society
- The Rehabilitation Act has not been reauthorized in fifteen years even though it is required to reauthorize every five years
- S. 1356 sets forward a path to help close the unemployment gap and produce better outcomes in competitive, integrated employment for a new generation of young adults with disabilities
- By establishing an Independent Living Administration with the move of the Independent Living Program to HHS and the Administration on Community Living, we believe it is better equipped to administer the IL Program with more efficiency, transparency, and cost-effective strategy

This is a very good bill and I ask for your vote as it moves to the Senate floor.