

**From:** [Gary Arnold](#)  
**To:** [CookCounty Board \(Secretary to the Board\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Dave Hanson](#); [Horacio Esparza](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Cook County Finance Committee Meeting: November 16, 2022  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 15, 2022 10:08:58 AM

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**Hello, Here are comments from Progress Center for the Cook County Finance Committee Meeting.**

thank you,

**Gary Arnold**

**Progress Center for Independent Living written Comments for the Cook County Board Finance Committee in support of Ordinance Item Number 22-5471**

**Wednesday, November 16, 2022**

**Comments**

Progress Center is a Center for Independent Living. There are 22 Centers for Independent Living in the State of Illinois. Each center supports people with disabilities through direct service, advocacy, and peer support.

Each Center for Independent Living in Illinois serves a specific geographic area. Progress Center serves Suburban Cook County.

The goal of centers for independent living is to address, navigate and eliminate barriers to independence.

Historically, a significant barrier to independence has been unemployment.

In more than one way, this ordinance offers the disabled community in Cook County tools to address the barrier.

First of all, because of disabled people are often passed over for jobs because of social bias and systemic education and healthcare failures, many disabled people create their own businesses. Ordinance Item Number 22-5471 creates an incentive for Cook County to contract with Disabled Owned Businesses.

Also, under this ordinance, contractors will receive preferences if they sub-contract disabled, and the ordinance increases incentives for businesses to hire the disabled.

And finally, under this ordinance, Cook County will incentivize doing business with non-profits such as Progress Center, which is staffed by a majority of people with disabilities.

I am glad that the Finance Committee is considering this ordinance. I urge the Finance Committee and the full Cook County Board to support the employment and independence of people with disabilities by passage of this ordinance.

Thank you,

Gary Arnold  
Program Director  
Progress Center

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