

Hello, I am Judy Bernardez. I am a staff member of North Shore Elder Services. Previously, I was an employee of the Independent Living Center of the North Shore and Cape Ann. I am here representing the Board of Directors, Staff, and Volunteers of North Shore Elder Services at the request of our Executive Director, Paul Lanzikos, who is attending the agency's Board of Directors' meeting this evening.

Thirty years ago, on April 10, 1987, seven North Shore residents submitted legal documents to the Secretary of the Commonwealth to establish an organization dedicated to, and I quote, "provide social services, information and referral, peer counseling, advocacy, independent living skills, and development services for individuals with severe physical or mental disabilities in the North Shore and Cape Ann areas of the Commonwealth." End quote.

Hence, the Independent Living Center of the North Shore and Cape Ann, Inc. was established. Thirty

years later, the organization continues to pursue its original mission with full commitment and effectiveness. Thousands of individuals have been empowered to live their lives to the fullest. All of us living on the North Shore, no matter our abilities and challenges, are all the better for the work of the Independent Living Center, its staff, and its volunteers.

The Board of Directors, Management, and Staff at North Shore Elder Services are proud to be associated with the Independent Living Center. We look forward to building on this solid relationship over the next thirty years and, as a result of the advocacy and effort of the ILCNSCA, to celebrate the fact that everyone, no matter their situation, can live their lives as fully and in the way they choose with no stigma, discrimination, and maximum opportunity.

Best wishes.