Alex Ghenis from a balcony on a bright, sunny day.

♫ music ♫

ALEX: Hi, my name is Alex Ghenis

and I'm a disability rights advocate

here in Berkeley, California.

♫ ♫ ♫

Shots of the city of Berkeley and U.C. campus.

Did you know that Berkeley is the home

of the modern independent living movement?

In this college town, a man named Ed Roberts

started fighting for the independence

and empowerment of people with disabilities

back in the 1960s.

♫ ♫ ♫

Black and white photo of Ed Roberts, smiling while reading a book in an iron lung.

When Ed Roberts started living on campus,

a whole crew of people with disabilities came along.

Photo of Ed with disabled student colleagues.

The situation grew and transformed into the campus'

Disabled Students Residence Program or DSRP.

Unfortunately, the university is closing the DSRP

due to budget cuts and more.

LISA: My name's Lisa Albertson.

I am an undergraduate transfer student

and in 2015, I founded and started

the Berkeley Disabled Students group

in reaction to the disability crisis on campus.

♫ ♫ ♫

Shots of students with mixed abilities on Berkeley's campus.

We want the university to make disability a priority

and quit using the statements that this is where

the independent living movement was birthed,

the disability rights movement,

when on the other hand, they're eliminating

disabled students' programs and services left and right.

Shot of protesters at U.C. Berkeley.

Since our protests, we're gaining momentum.

More students and allies are coming out to support

and we're gonna take that and run with it.

We've learned that this is the only way

to get the university's attention and make them

do what they're supposed to do -

provide us with our accommodations and services

so that we can be successful and graduate.

ALEX: To keep the DSRP alive, go to

RootedinRights.org/saveDSRP

and sign on to the petition.

You can also consider opening a residence program

at your university.

Thank you for fighting for independent living.

For more videos from Storytellers like me,

check out RootedinRights.org

And to find out how you can help

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NARRATOR: Written and Directed by Alex Ghenis

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