



**ACTION ALERT** - Contact your U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative to support establishment of tax-advantaged accounts that allow saving funds for qualified disability expenses **WITHOUT** jeopardizing eligibility to Medicaid, SSI and other means-tested programs.

The ABLE Act will establish accounts such as the one described above.

**If you support establishment of accounts such as those indicated in the ABLE Act contact your U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative.**

- The ABLE Act needs more Senators and Representatives to sign on as co-sponsors before it is moved on for a vote.
- The sooner additional co-sponsors are secured the sooner voting on the ABLE Act will occur.

**How do I contact my U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative?**

Senators:

- David Vitter: [www.vitter.senate.gov/contact](http://www.vitter.senate.gov/contact) 202 224-4623
- Mary Landrieu: [www.landrieu.senate.gov/?p=contact](http://www.landrieu.senate.gov/?p=contact) 202 224-5824  
Sen. Landrieu is already a co-sponsor of the ABLE Act. A message of appreciation is appropriate.

Representative: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)

- Enter your zip code in the box at the top right of the page
- Click on your representative's name. This will take you to their website.

- Click on “contact”, “email”
- Enter zip code to verify residency
- Enter message
- Submit
- Telephone number to the representative’s Washington, D.C. office is also on this page. If you choose to call your representative, your call should be made to the Washington, D.C. office.

**Sample message:**

- Subject line of email or at top of letter or “regarding” in phone call: “Support ability to save for disability expenses without jeopardizing eligibility for services”
- Be sure to personalize your message! Include a few short sentences about yourself or family member in your message. You may want to include:
  - Your name or the name of the person you are advocating for and his/her relationship to you.
  - The diagnosis or disability of this individual
  - How being able to save for disability expenses without jeopardizing eligibility for services would affect you
- Include this message: Being able to save and build assets will break the cycle of poverty experienced by many individuals with disabilities and their families. It is anticipated this change will promote personal responsibility and decrease reliance on public services.
- If your U.S. Senator or U.S. Representative is interested in supporting the ability to save for disability expenses without jeopardizing eligibility for Medicaid, SSI or other means-tested programs, please have them contact Sen. Casey/Jennifer McCloskey at [Jennifer.McCloskey@casey.senate.gov](mailto:Jennifer.McCloskey@casey.senate.gov)

**Confirm your action:**

- Please send an email to [shennessey@peoplefirstla.org](mailto:shennessey@peoplefirstla.org) or [sharon@peoplefirstla.org](mailto:sharon@peoplefirstla.org) to let us know you took action.

## **Background Information:**

### **What is the ABLE Act?**

- Achieving a Better Life Experience Act
- U.S. Senate version - S. 313      U.S. House of Representatives version - H.R. 647
- Uses “529 education savings accounts program”

### **What does the ABLE Act do?**

- Allows individuals with disabilities to save money WITHOUT losing eligibility for Medicaid services, SSI and other means-tested programs
- Provides individuals with disabilities the same types of flexible savings tools that all other Americans have (like college saving accounts, health saving accounts and individual retirement saving accounts)
- Supplements (does not supplant) benefits provided by Medicaid or other sources
- Encourages savings and asset building
- Provides the opportunity to attain/maintain independence and self-sufficiency
- Includes fiscal safeguard for states

### **What can the ABLE account be used to fund?**

- Assistive technology
- Medical and dental care
- Community based supports
- Housing
- Transportation
- Employment training

### **What are the expected effects of ABLE ACT?**

- Promote personal responsibility
- Decrease reliance on public services
- Provide an improved quality of life
  
- The ABLE Act was introduced in the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress (2011/2012) (S.1872, H.R. 3423). It received broad bipartisan support; but, lacked sufficient co-sponsors to proceed.
  
- The ABLE Act was introduced in the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress (2013/2014) (S. 313, H.R. 647) in February 2013 by Senators Casey (D-PA) and Richard Burr (R-NC) and Representatives Crenshaw (R-FL), McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) and Van Hollen (D-MD).

- The ABLE Act has been assigned to the Senate Finance Committee, the House Ways and Means Committee, and the House Commerce and Energy Committee.
- The ABLE Act will proceed after additional co-sponsors have been secured.

**Questions or Concerns:**

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