



**SCOTT FITZPATRICK**  
MISSOURI STATE TREASURER

April 4, 2019

Senator Roy Blunt  
260 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Blunt,

I write today to ask for your support for S.651 the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Age Adjustment Act. This important legislation will expand program eligibility, and allow people who have acquired a disability before age 46 to open ABLE accounts and begin saving money without losing their federal benefits. Currently, participants must have acquired a disability before age 26 to be eligible.

Prior to its passage in 2014, people with disabilities could not have more than \$2,000 in assets or they would risk no longer qualifying for certain federal programs. This created a cycle of poverty for people with disabilities. ABLE accounts aid in breaking this cycle.

Today, because of the ABLE Act, individuals with disabilities can save for things they could only dream of before—like cars and homes. Likewise, families of children with disabilities can save for long-term care and get a tax break. These direct benefits—peace of mind and financial independence—make this program invaluable for participants.

The initial passage of the ABLE ACT was a monumental step forward for individuals living with disabilities but there is still work to be done. Raising the eligibility age expands access to the program to millions of individuals with disabilities across the country. Additionally, this expansion would help more than one million veterans with disabilities become eligible to open ABLE accounts.

Here in Missouri, approximately 800,000 people live with a disability. Since its implementation two years ago, almost 1,000 MO ABLE accounts have been opened making Missouri's program one of the largest nationwide. There is already almost five million dollars in assets under management in the MO ABLE program.

As State Treasurer, I administer MO ABLE. My staff members and I devote a significant amount of time to raising awareness for this valuable program. During a recent presentation, a representative from my office was approached by a man named Sean from Independence, Missouri. Sean explained that he had developed a disability at age 30 and he wanted to know if he was eligible for MO ABLE.

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Sadly, as the law currently stands, the answer is no. Sean is not eligible. He cannot have more than \$2,000 in assets without risking the loss of his federal benefits. He cannot save for the future. A difference of four years stands between Sean and financial security.

This legislation could change Sean's story. It could change the story for millions of Americans.

I ask that you support this expansion of eligibility so that more Missourians can use this beneficial program to achieve financial independence and security.

Thank you,

Scott Fitzpatrick  
Missouri State Treasurer