



**OREGON
STATE
TREASURY**

Tobias Read
Oregon State Treasurer

Darren Bond
Deputy State Treasurer

March 27, 2019

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Greg Walden
U.S. House of Representatives
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Earl Blumenauer
U.S. House of Representatives
1111 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici
U.S. House of Representatives
2231 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
U.S. House of Representatives
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kurt Schrader
U.S. House of Representatives
2431 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Oregon Federal Delegation:

Among the savings programs administered by Oregon State Treasury is the Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) plan. We are writing to ask you to help us provide the power of the ABLE program to more Oregonians.

Signed into federal law in 2014, ABLE allows certain individuals with disabilities the opportunity to save resources in a tax-advantaged savings account for the purpose of covering disability-related expenses. Importantly, the assets saved in an ABLE account are not taken into consideration when determining the individual's eligibility for federally funded benefits, including Supplemental Security Income and Medicaid.

In Oregon, more than 2,300 accounts have been opened for Oregonians with disabilities and these accounts have accrued more than \$11 million in assets since late 2016. The program in Oregon is thriving and making a positive impact on Oregonians' lives.



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As we enter into the third year of the Oregon ABLE Savings Plan it is more important than ever that we work to ensure the program's accessibility and long term health while we continue to expand participation.

Currently, only individuals who experienced their disability prior to their 26th birthday qualify for an ABLE savings account. This means that many individuals who could benefit from ABLE don't qualify since many disabilities occur later in life. Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's disease), Multiple Sclerosis, or paralysis due to an accident are just a few examples. Additionally, veterans older than 26 who become disabled as a result of their service are also ineligible for ABLE accounts.

We are calling on members of the Oregon Federal Delegation to support increasing the age of disability onset from prior to age 26 to prior to age 46 by supporting the ABLE Age Adjustment Act (H.R. 1814/S. 651). This bill would expand the pool of individuals who can benefit from ABLE accounts and would enhance the long-term stability of the program.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that more Oregonians who experience a disability can benefit from the ABLE plan. We would like them to join more than 2,300 Oregonians with disabilities and their families who benefit from the additional financial security and continued access to federal benefits offered as a result of ABLE.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tobias Read



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Representative Margaret Doherty
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Representative Ken Helm
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Elizabeth Steiner Hayward

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Representative Jennifer Williamson
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