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April 27, 2018

Honorable Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher  
Chair, Appropriations Committee  
California State Assembly  
Capitol Building, Room 2114  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2039 (FONG) as amended March 21, 2018 – SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez Fletcher:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, **supports AB 2039**. This bill is currently pending in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

California recently adopted the Stephen Beck, Jr., Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014, which allows certain individuals with disabilities to accumulate savings without losing their eligibility for means tested SSI, Medicaid and other government benefit programs. The money in an ABLE account can be used to pay for a broad range of “qualified disability expenses” such as medical bills, assistive technology, housing modifications, education related expenses, etc.

AB 2039 further incentivizes saving in these accounts because it allows for a state tax deduction in computing adjusted gross income in an amount equal to the amount contributed by a taxpayer during the taxable year to a CalABLE account.

This change in the law encourages program enrollment and promotes increased contribution levels of these funds, which then can be used by the beneficiary of the ABLE account for disability related needs.

For these reasons, DRC supports this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Evelyn M. Abouhassan".

Evelyn Abouhassan  
Senior Legislative Advocate  
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Vince Fong, California State Assembly  
Sara Baumann, Fellow, Office of Assembly Member Fong  
Honorable Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee  
Luke Reidenbach, Principal Consultant, Assembly Appropriations  
Committee  
Sue Highland, Committee Secretary, Assembly Revenue and  
Taxation Committee  
Julia King, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus Committee