



**LEGISLATION & PUBLIC
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June 9, 2017

Honorable Mike McGuire
Chair, Governance and Finance Committee
California State Senate
Capitol Building, Room 112
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 384 (IRWIN) – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Ridley-Thomas:

Disability Rights California, a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, supports AB 384. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee on April 17, 2017.

The Stephen Beck, Jr., Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014 (ABLE Act), encourages and assists individuals and families to save private funds in a tax advantaged savings account for the purpose of supporting persons with disabilities to maintain their health, independence, and quality of life by excluding from gross income distributions used for qualified disability expenses by a beneficiary of a qualified ABLE program. In 2015, the state established a qualified ABLE program and the Qualified ABLE Fund for purposes of implementing the federal ABLE Act. The language from this bill allowed the establishment of an ABLE account for residents of California.


AB 384 would expand the residency requirement from a resident of California to a resident of the United States. Considering this is a federal program that has been established in California, it is unnecessary for someone who is qualified for an ABLE account and wants to participate to

be a resident of California. The California residency requirement is over limiting and counters the goal of encouraging program participation. AB 384 would simplify California's residency requirements for the ABLE program and the Qualified ABLE Fund, thereby making it easier for people with disabilities to set up an account.

AB 384 would also eliminate the \$100,000 exclusion cap for purposes of eligibility for a state or local means-tested program. Costs for people with disabilities can be expensive. Funds from an ABLE account can be spent on qualified disability expenses such as: medical related bills, assistive technology, housing modifications, etc. The elimination of the cap for state or local means-tested programs will allow people with disabilities to save enough money for their future disability related costs while also assisting them to live independently.

For these reasons, we support this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Evelyn M. Abouhassan".

Evelyn M. Abouhassan
Senior Legislative Advocate
Disability Rights California

cc: Honorable Jacqui Irwin, California State Assembly
Jessica Jin, Fellow, Office of Assembly Member Irwin
Honorable Members, Senate Governance and Finance Committee
Colin Grinnell, Staff Director, Senate Governance and Finance
Committee