



**Celebrate the ADA**

Join NASHIA in Celebrating the 28th Anniversary of the ADA:  
*Support the ABLE Age Adjustment Act*

National Association of State Head Injury Administrators

This Thursday, July 26, marks the **28<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**, which is a landmark civil rights law that prohibits discrimination based on disability. **To celebrate the 28th anniversary** of its enactment, please **take a few minutes to call or email your legislators to ask them to support the ABLE Age Adjustment Act (S. 817/H.R. 1874)**. This legislation would amend Section 529A(e) of the Internal Revenue Code to increase the eligibility for Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts for onset of disability from prior to age 26 to prior to age 46 so that millions more people with disabilities, including individuals with brain injury, can take advantage of this important savings tool. Despite nearly three decades under ADA law, people with disabilities still regularly encounter discrimination in many aspects of life, including lacking financial opportunities to save for their future and enhance their quality of life. Together we can advocate to **#ExpandABLE** and pass the **#ABLEAgeAdjustment Act**.

### **28 Years Ago . . .**

"Three weeks ago we celebrated our nation's Independence Day. Today we're here to rejoice in and celebrate another 'independence day,' one that is long overdue. With today's signing of the landmark Americans for Disabilities Act, every man, woman, and child with a disability can now pass through once-closed doors into a bright new era of equality, independence, and freedom."

-- President George H.W. Bush --



## Action Alert!

### SUPPORT THE ABLE AGE ADJUSTMENT ACT (H.R. 1874/S. 817)

#### **ABLE Age Adjustment Act Background**

First introduced in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, the bipartisan ABLE Age Adjustment Act was re-introduced in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress by Senators Bob Casey (D-PA), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Richard Burr (R-NC), and Representatives Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Pete Sessions (R-TX), Tony Cárdenas (D-CA), Chris Smith (R-NJ), and Jim Langevin (D-RI). The limitation on eligibility based on age of onset of disability did not exist in the original ABLE legislation, but was added at the end of the ABLE Act's nearly ten-year legislative history to reduce the bill's score and get it over the finish line. This concession resulted in otherwise-eligible individuals with disabilities - many of whom fought for years to get the ABLE Act passed - being prevented from realizing the benefits associated with the ABLE Act based solely on the age at which they became disabled. Nearly 160 other organizations from across the country, believe that ABLE should be expanded to include more people with disabilities, See the letter [here](#) urging Congress to pass this bill this session.

Beyond the fairness/equity argument for increasing the age of onset, it has now become a financial imperative to pass the ABLE Age Adjustment Act. There are currently thirty-eight States with ABLE programs, yet data collected by the National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) shows that the number of ABLE accounts being opened is much lower than anticipated. The long-term sustainability, availability, and affordability of some ABLE programs for individuals with disabilities are in doubt without this expansion of eligibility. (See [Sustainability Report](#).) For more information about ABLE accounts, please visit the [ABLE National Resource Center](#).

#### ***What can you do to help?***

Ask your Representative and Senators to please stand with people with disabilities and their families and cosponsor the bipartisan ABLE Age Adjustment Act that increases the age of the onset of the eligible beneficiary's disability from prior to 26 years old to prior to 46 years old in 529A ABLE -- allowing more individuals with brain injury to be eligible.

#### **Contacting Your Representative**

**Call** the Capitol Switchboard at 202-225-3121 and ask for your Representative's office. Ask for health or disability staff. If you don't reach him/her, leave a message! or

**E-mail:** Don't know your Representative's email? Visit [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and enter your ZIP code to find your Representative's email.

#### **Contacting Your Senators**

**Call** the United States Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121. A switchboard operator will connect you directly with the Senate office you request.

**Email:** To find your your Senators click [here](#). E-mails should be sent from a constituent's e-mail account directly to the health or disability Legislative Assistant (LA). State workers and other employees may want to send from your personal e-mail account at home.

**Message:** Ask your Senators and Representatives to support people with brain injury and their families by cosponsoring the bipartisan ABLE Age Adjustment Act (S. 817/ HR 1874). Expanding the age of onset is the right thing to do and will give more than 6 million additional people with disabilities, including individuals with brain injury, access to this important savings tool that enables them to accumulate more than \$2000 in assets without jeopardizing their benefits.

(Click [here](#) for a handout for further information that can also be shared with others in your State.)

*Please contact your congressional members and ask them to cosponsor the ABLE Age Adjustment Act today!*

Whether or not you are currently eligible for an ABLE account, we all have a stake in ensuring the success of ABLE programs so that they are sustainable and so that costs for all ABLE account owners are kept low.

**Note:**The information for this *Action Alert* is taken from materials prepared by the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, of which, NASHIA is a member. NASHIA has signed on to CCD letter supporting this legislation.

Please feel free to forward and share with disability advocates, advisory boards/councils, families and individuals with brain injury in your State.

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