



April 15, 2015

To: Senate Finance and Revenue Committee

From: Ross Ryan, Oregon Self Advocacy Coalition

RE: Support for SB 777

Chair Hass and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ross Ryan. I am a self-advocate with the Oregon Self Advocacy Coalition. We are a statewide coalition with 18 groups of adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities. We talk about things that matter to us. Saving money for our futures matters to us because we have dreams like everyone else. Saving money helps us reach our dreams.

We are members of our communities. We want to fit in like everyone else. But just like everyone else, we need to save money to live our lives. But now when you save over \$2,000, you lose your Social Security benefits. This means that people with disabilities cannot save like everyone else.

The ABLE Act (SB 777) allows people with disabilities to save for their futures. If I had an ABLE Account and could save money without risking my benefits, I would save for three things: 1. buy a house to have a roof over my head that I can call my own; 2. buy a car and hire staff to drive me to my job and other places; and 3. save for college to study meteorology.

Buying a house is important to me so I can own my own place instead of paying rent each month. It would also allow me to have people over when I wanted.

Buying a car is important to me because I live in a rural area. Public transportation doesn't run when I need it and doesn't go the places I need to go. My job requires that I be in a lot of different places. Sometimes these places do not have bus stops close by – or it takes me twice as long to get there if I take the bus. If I had my own car, I could hire staff to get me to the places I need to go.

Going to college is important to me because I feel I still have a lot to learn. I am interested in meteorology and have taught myself quite a bit about it. But I would like to go to college so I can learn more.

The ABLE Act will help me save money so I can do these important things. Please pass SB 777.