



April 3, 2018

Representative Steven Johnson, Chair
House Committee on Taxation
Kansas State Capitol
Room 346-S
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Re: In SUPPORT of SB 449; *AN ACT concerning savings programs; relating to beneficiaries of ABLE accounts, transfers, qualified higher education expenses; income taxation, deduction for contributions*

Dear Chair Johnson, Vice Chair Phillips, Ranking Minority Member Sawyer and Members of the Committee -

I am submitting this testimony in support of SB 449 as a parent of a young adult with autism, a constituent of Kansas House District 8, and as Director of State Government Affairs for Autism Speaks.

Autism Speaks is the nation's leading autism awareness, science, and advocacy organization. We are dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. We do this through advocacy and support, increasing understanding and acceptance, and advancing research and information. Autism Speaks supports non-partisan policies that meet the autism community's needs.

Existing Kansas law allows for families and individuals to save for the disability-related expenses of a disabled individual in a federal tax-advantaged account (i.e., Kansas ABLE Savings Plans). However, families may be deterred from investing in ABLE accounts due to a provision that allows Kansas Medicaid to seek proceeds from the account following the death of the beneficiary (i.e., the "Medicaid clawback provision").

SB 449 amends the existing ABLE Act by removing the Medicaid clawback provision. SB 449 also allows deductions for contributions to ABLE accounts on a par with deductions for contributions to college savings accounts. Autism Speaks supports both of these amendments, which further incentivize participation in Kansas ABLE Savings Plans.

I urge the committee's support of SB 449.

Sincerely,

Michael Wasmer
Director, State Government Affairs
Autism Speaks
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