



***Substitute House Bill No. 7107***

***Public Act No. 25-148***

***AN ACT CONCERNING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY EXPANDING  
GOVERNMENTAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, UPDATES TO ABLE ACCOUNT  
STATUTES AND OVERSIGHT OF DRIVING PROGRAMS FOR  
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to study expanding governmental employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. The task force shall study best practices nationwide for governmental employment programs for persons with disabilities and costs and benefits of adopting such programs in the state.

(b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

(1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives, who has expertise in employment for persons with disabilities;

(2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, who has expertise in challenges facing persons with disabilities in gaining access to employment;

(3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of Representatives, who is a representative of an organization representing

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community nonprofit contractors who employ persons with disabilities;

(4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who is a current or past participant in the janitorial work program administered by the Commissioner of Administrative Services pursuant to section 4a-82 of the general statutes;

(5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives, who is a representative of an advocacy organization serving persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities;

(6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

(7) The Commissioner of Administrative Services, or the commissioner's designee;

(8) The chairperson of the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities, or the chairperson's designee;

(9) The Commissioner of Developmental Services, or the commissioner's designee;

(10) The Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, or the secretary's designee;

(11) The Commissioner of Aging and Disabilities Services, or the commissioner's designee;

(12) The Chief Court Administrator of the Judicial Branch, or the Chief Court Administrator's designee; and

(13) The chancellor of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities, or the chancellor's designee.

(c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member

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of the General Assembly.

(d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to human services shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

(g) Not later than January 1, 2027, the task force shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to government administration and elections, higher education, human services, the judiciary, labor and public health, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or January 1, 2027, whichever is later.

Sec. 2. Section 3-39j of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

As used in this section and sections 3-39k to 3-39r, inclusive, as amended by this act:

(1) "Achieving a better life experience account" or "ABLE account" means an account established and maintained pursuant to sections 3-39k to [3-39q] 3-39r, inclusive, as amended by this act, for the purposes of paying the qualified disability expenses [related to the blindness or

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disability] of a designated beneficiary.

(2) "Authorized individual" means an individual or entity who (A) meets the requirements of 26 CFR 1.529A-2 to establish an ABLE account on behalf of an eligible individual, and (B) is authorized by the state's qualified ABLE program to establish or act on behalf of the designated beneficiary with respect to an ABLE account.

[(2)] (3) "Deposit" means a deposit, payment, contribution, gift or other transfer of funds.

[(3)] (3) "Depositor" means any person making a deposit into an ABLE account pursuant to a participation agreement.]

(4) "Designated beneficiary" [means any eligible individual who is the owner of an ABLE account established under a qualified ABLE program] has the same meaning as provided in Section 529A.

[(5)] (5) "Disability certification" means, with respect to an individual, a certification to the satisfaction of the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States by the individual or the parent or guardian of the individual or an individual establishing an ABLE account pursuant to subsection (g) of section 3-39k that (A) certifies that (i) the individual has a medically determinable physical or mental impairment, that results in marked and severe functional limitations, and that can be expected to result in death or that has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than twelve months, or is blind within the meaning of Section 1614(a)(2) of the Social Security Act, and (ii) such impairment or blindness occurred before the date on which the individual attained the age of twenty-six, and (B) includes a copy of the individual's diagnosis relating to the individual's relevant impairment or blindness that is signed by a physician who is licensed pursuant to chapter 370 or, to the extent permitted by federal law, (i) an advanced practice registered nurse who is licensed pursuant to chapter 378, (ii) a

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physician assistant who is licensed pursuant to chapter 370, or (iii) if the individual's impairment is blindness, an optometrist licensed pursuant to chapter 380.]

[(6)] (5) "Eligible individual" [means an individual who is entitled to benefits during a taxable year based on blindness or disability under Title II or XVI of the Social Security Act, and such blindness or disability occurred before the date on which the individual attained the age of twenty-six, provided a disability certification or self-certification with respect to such individual is filed with the State Treasurer for such taxable year] has the same meaning as provided in Section 529A.

[(7)] "Federal ABLÉ Act" means the federal ABLÉ Act of 2014, P.L. 113-295, as amended from time to time.]

[(8)] (6) "Participation agreement" means an agreement between the trust established pursuant to section 3-39k, as amended by this act, and [depositors] a designated beneficiary or authorized individual that provides for participation in an ABLÉ account for the benefit of a designated beneficiary.

(7) "Qualified ABLÉ program" means any program established and maintained pursuant to Section 529A.

[(9)] (8) "Qualified disability expenses" [means any expenses related to an eligible individual's blindness or disability that are made for the benefit of an eligible individual who is the designated beneficiary, including the following expenses: Education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology and personal support services, health, prevention and wellness, financial management and administrative services, legal fees, expenses for oversight and monitoring, funeral and burial expenses, and other expenses that are approved by the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States under regulations adopted by the Secretary pursuant to

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the federal ABLE Act] has the same meaning as provided in Section 529A.

[(10) "Self-certification" means a certification, under penalty of perjury, to the satisfaction of the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States by an individual establishing an ABLE account that (A) certifies that (i) the individual has a medically determinable physical or mental impairment that results in marked and severe functional limitations and that can be expected to result in death or that has lasted or can be expected to last for a continuous period of not less than twelve months, or is blind within the meaning of Section 1614(a)(2) of the Social Security Act, (ii) such impairment or blindness occurred before the date on which the individual attained the age of twenty-six, and (iii) the person establishing the account is the individual who will be the designated beneficiary of the account or is a person authorized to establish such account under the provisions of subsection (g) of section 3-39k, and (B) includes the applicable diagnostic code from those listed on Internal Revenue Service Form 5498-QA identifying the individual's impairment.]

(9) "Section 529A" means Section 529A of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding internal revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to time, and the regulations adopted thereunder by the United States Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service, as amended from time to time.

Sec. 3. Section 3-39k of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) The State Treasurer (1) shall establish a qualified ABLE program pursuant to [the federal ABLE Act] Section 529A and sections 3-39j to [3-39q] 3-39r, inclusive, as amended by this act, and (2) may contract with any state with a qualified ABLE program [established pursuant to the federal ABLE Act] to provide residents of this state with access to

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such state's program.

(b) (1) Under the program established pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section: (A) The State Treasurer shall administer individual ABLE accounts to encourage and assist eligible individuals and their families in saving [private] funds to provide support for eligible individuals, (B) a person may make contributions to an individual ABLE account to meet the qualified disability expenses of the designated beneficiary of the account, and (C) the State Treasurer shall designate a director of outreach for the ABLE program from among the existing employees of the office of the State Treasurer, who shall coordinate outreach and marketing efforts concerning ABLE accounts.

(2) For the purposes of such program, there is established within the Office of the State Treasurer the Connecticut Achieving A Better Life Experience Trust. The trust shall constitute an instrumentality of the state and shall perform essential governmental functions, as provided in sections 3-39j to [3-39q] 3-39r, inclusive, as amended by this act. The trust shall receive and hold all payments and deposits intended for ABLE accounts as well as gifts, bequests, endowments or federal, state or local grants and any other funds from public or private sources and all earnings, until disbursed in accordance with sections 3-39j to [3-39q] 3-39r, inclusive, as amended by this act.

(c) (1) The amounts on deposit in the trust shall not constitute property of the state and the trust shall not be construed to be a department, institution or agency of the state. Amounts on deposit in the trust shall not be commingled with state funds and the state shall have no claim to or against, or interest in, such amounts, except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection. Any contract entered into by, or any obligation of, the trust shall not constitute a debt or obligation of the state and the state shall have no obligation to any designated beneficiary or any other person on account of the trust and all amounts obligated to be paid from the trust shall be limited to amounts available

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for such obligation on deposit in the trust. The amounts on deposit in the trust may only be disbursed in accordance with the provisions of sections 3-39j to [3-39q] 3-39r, inclusive, as amended by this act.

(2) The trust shall continue in existence as long as it holds any deposits or other funds or has any obligations and until its existence is terminated by law, and upon termination of the trust, any unclaimed assets of the trust shall [return to the state. Property of the trust shall] be governed by section 3-61a.

(d) The State Treasurer shall be responsible for the receipt, maintenance, administration, investment and disbursements of amounts from the trust. The trust shall not receive deposits in any form other than cash. No [depositor] authorized individual or designated beneficiary may direct the investment of any contributions or amounts held in the trust other than in the specific fund options provided for by the trust and shall not direct investments in such specific fund options more than two times in any calendar year. No interest, or portion of any interest, in the program shall be used as security for a loan.

(e) A person may make deposits to an ABLE account to meet the qualified disability expenses of the designated beneficiary of the account, provided the trust and deposits meet the other requirements of this section [, the federal ABLE Act and any regulations adopted pursuant to the federal ABLE Act by the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States] and Section 529A.

(f) On or before December 31, 2017, and annually thereafter, the State Treasurer shall submit (1) in accordance with the provisions of subsection (a) of section 3-37, a report to the Governor on the operations of the trust, including the receipts, disbursements, assets, investments and liabilities and administrative costs of the trust for the prior fiscal year, and (2) in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, a report on the trust and any contract entered into pursuant to subdivision (2) of



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subsection (a) of this section to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance and public health, and shall make such report available to each [depositor] authorized individual and designated beneficiary. The report required under subdivision (2) of this subsection shall include, but need not be limited to: (A) The number of ABLE accounts; (B) the total amount of contributions to such accounts; (C) the total amount and nature of distributions from such accounts; and (D) a description of issues relating to the abuse of such accounts, if any.

(g) An ABLE account may be established (1) by the eligible individual, (2) by a person selected by the eligible individual, or (3) if the eligible individual is unable to establish an ABLE account, [on behalf of such individual by, in the following order: Such individual's agent under a power of attorney, a conservator or legal guardian, spouse, parent, sibling, grandparent, or a representative payee appointed for the eligible individual by the Social Security Administration] by an authorized individual.

Sec. 4. Section 3-39l of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

The State Treasurer, on behalf of the trust and for purposes of the trust, may:

(1) Receive and invest moneys in the trust in any instruments, obligations, securities or property in accordance with section 3-39m;

(2) Establish [consistent] terms for [each] the participation agreement [, bulk deposit, coupon or installment payments] and the administration of ABLE accounts, including, but not limited to, (A) the method of payment into an ABLE account by payroll deduction, transfer from bank accounts or otherwise, (B) the termination, withdrawal or transfer of payments under an ABLE account, including transfers to or from a

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qualified ABLE program established by another state, [pursuant to the federal ABLE Act,] (C) penalties for distributions not used [or made in accordance with the federal ABLE Act] for qualified disability expenses, and (D) the amount of any charges or fees to be assessed in connection with the administration of the trust;

(3) Enter into one or more contractual agreements, including, but not limited to, contracts for legal, actuarial, accounting, custodial, advisory, management, administrative, advertising, marketing and consulting services for the trust and pay for such services from the gains and earnings of the trust;

(4) Procure insurance in connection with the trust's property, assets, activities or deposits or contributions to the trust;

(5) Apply for, accept and expend gifts, grants or donations from public or private sources to enable the Connecticut Achieving A Better Life Experience Trust to carry out its objectives;

(6) Sue and be sued;

(7) Establish one or more funds within the trust and maintain separate ABLE accounts for each designated beneficiary; [and]

(8) Pay for any fees associated with the administration of individual ABLE accounts; and

[(8)] (9) Take any other action necessary to carry out the purposes of sections 3-39j to [3-39q] 3-39r, inclusive, as amended by this act, and incidental to the duties imposed on the State Treasurer pursuant to said sections.

Sec. 5. Section 3-39p of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

The state pledges to [depositors] authorized individuals, designated

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beneficiaries and any party who enters into contracts with the trust, pursuant to the provisions of sections 3-39j to [3-39q] 3-39r, inclusive, as amended by this act, that the state will not limit or alter the rights under said sections vested in the trust or contract with the trust until such obligations are fully met and discharged and such contracts are fully performed on the part of the trust, provided nothing in this section shall preclude such limitation or alteration if adequate provision is made by law for the protection of such [depositors] authorized individuals and designated beneficiaries pursuant to the obligations of the trust or parties who entered into such contracts with the trust. The trust, on behalf of the state, may include a description of such pledge and undertaking for the state in participation agreements and such other obligations or contracts.

Sec. 6. Section 3-39q of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

The State Treasurer shall take any action necessary to ensure that the trust complies with all applicable requirements of state and federal laws, rules and regulations to the extent necessary for the trust to constitute a qualified ABLE program and be exempt from taxation under [the federal ABLE Act, and any regulations adopted pursuant to the federal ABLE Act by the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States] Section 529A.

Sec. 7. Section 3-39r of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, to the extent permissible under federal law, moneys invested in an individual ABLE account, contributions to an individual ABLE account and distributions for qualified disability expenses pursuant to sections 3-39j to 3-39q, inclusive, as amended by this act, shall be disregarded for purposes of determining an individual's eligibility for assistance under

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[the (1) temporary family assistance program, as described in section 17b-112, (2) programs funded under the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program block grant, (3) the state-administered general assistance program, as described in section 17b-191, (4) the optional state supplementation program, as described in section 17b-600, to the extent such invested moneys, contributions and distributions may be disregarded under the federal Supplemental Security Income Program, and (5) any other federally funded assistance or benefit program, including, but not limited to, the state's medical assistance program, whenever such program requires consideration of one or more financial circumstances of an individual for the purpose of determining the individual's eligibility to receive any assistance or benefit or the amount of any assistance or benefit] any means-tested public assistance program administered by the state or any political subdivision of the state.

(b) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, no moneys invested in the ABLE accounts shall be considered to be an asset for purposes of determining an individual's eligibility for need-based, institutional aid grants offered to an individual at the public eligible educational institutions in the state.

Sec. 8. Section 14-11b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

(a) There shall be within the Department of [Aging and Disability Services] Motor Vehicles a unit for the purpose of evaluating and training persons with disabilities in the operation of motor vehicles. There shall be assigned to the driver training unit for persons with disabilities such staff as is necessary for the orderly administration of the driver training program for persons with disabilities. The personnel assigned to the driver training unit for persons with disabilities shall, while engaged in the evaluation, [or] instruction or examination of a person with disabilities, have the authority and immunities with respect

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to such activities as are granted under the general statutes to motor vehicle inspectors. [The] Said Commissioner of Motor Vehicles may permit a person whose license has been withdrawn as a result of a condition that makes such person eligible for evaluation and training under this section to operate a motor vehicle while accompanied by personnel assigned to the driver training unit for persons with disabilities. [When a person with disabilities has successfully completed the driver training program for persons with disabilities, the Department of Aging and Disability Services shall certify such completion in writing to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles and shall recommend any license restrictions or limitations to be placed on the license of such person. The Commissioner of Motor Vehicles may accept such certification in lieu of the driving skills portion of the examination prescribed under subsection (e) of section 14-36. If such person with disabilities has met all other requirements for obtaining a license, the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles shall issue a license with such restrictions recommended by the Department of Aging and Disability Services.]

(b) Any resident of this state who has a serious physical or mental disability which does not render the resident incapable of operating a motor vehicle and who must utilize special equipment in order to operate a motor vehicle and who cannot obtain instruction in the operation of a motor vehicle through any alternate program, including, but not limited to, other state, federal or privately operated drivers' schools shall be eligible for instruction under the Department of [Aging and Disability Services] Motor Vehicles driver training program for persons with disabilities.

Governor's Action:  
Approved July 1, 2025