



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Nation's First Savings Plan Allows Individuals with Disabilities the Ability to Save and Invest

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

COLUMBUS &dash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of a new multi-media public service announcement (PSA) outreach effort for STABLE Accounts, which will increase statewide awareness for the recently opened investment accounts available to individuals with disabilities. Ohio was the first state in the country to offer enrollment for eligible individuals living with disabilities on June 1, 2016.

The STABLE Account outreach initiative will include paid advertising on television, digital, and social media. The PSA began running today, June 13th, and will run statewide in all major media markets: Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Lima, Toledo, Wheeling, and Youngstown.

The 30-second PSA features 18-year-old Down syndrome self-advocate Anne Gerhardt of Cincinnati, Ohio State Football Coach Urban Meyer, and Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel. Anne and her family were leading advocates for passage of the federal legislation that made possible STABLE Accounts. Anne was the first person in America to open a STABLE Account.

Under the Federal ABLA legislation, which was signed into law on December 19, 2014 with strong bipartisan support, each state is responsible for establishing and operating ABLA accounts. On July 16, 2015, Governor John Kasich signed into law HB 155, which passed unanimously by both the Ohio House and Senate, authorizing the Treasurer's Office to open and administer these accounts.

House Bill 64, the state operating budget, appropriated \$2 million to the Treasurer's office in Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 for the implementation and administration of STABLE Accounts. As part of this, the Treasurer's office must "develop marketing plans and promotional materials to publicize" STABLE Accounts.

"As Treasurer of Ohio I am proud to serve as administrator of STABLE Accounts," said Treasurer Mandel. "By assisting individuals and families with saving and investing, we are supporting persons with disabilities to maintain health, independence and quality of life."

"For almost a decade, the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) has been proud to be a leader in the effort to ensure individuals with Down syndrome (and other disabilities) are allowed to expand their economic opportunities and freedoms. The ABLA Act was an idea that started around a kitchen table in Northern Virginia by five dedicated parents from the Down syndrome community. Today is a historical achievement as now ABLA accounts are a reality for all individuals with disabilities in America thanks to the hard work of so many dedicated advocates from across the US," said NDSS President Sara Hart Weir. "We couldn't be more proud to participate in the launch of the STABLE Accounts in Ohio."

"National Disability Institute, along with the ABLA National Resource Center, congratulate the State of Ohio on the inaugural

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launch of the country's first 529A ABLÉ program," said Christopher Rodriguez, Senior Public Policy Advisor of the National Disability Institute. "Ohio, by providing these tax advantaged savings accounts to children and adults with disabilities, has begun to pave the way for a transformative opportunity for one of our country's most disenfranchised populations. The benefits of these STABLE Accounts will surely promote people with disabilities, and their families, to save for their futures and become a more significant part of the economic mainstream."

STABLE Accounts allow individuals with disabilities the opportunity to save and invest money without losing eligibility for certain public benefits programs, like Medicaid, SSI or SSDI. Earnings in STABLE Accounts are not subject to federal income tax, so long as funds are spent on qualified disability expenses.

STABLE Accounts have similar features to normal bank accounts, but are also investment accounts, similar to 529 college savings accounts or 401(k) retirement accounts. When a participant deposits money into their STABLE Account, the money can be invested in different options chosen by the participants. While participants can still withdraw and spend money as needed, a STABLE Account also allows money to grow and to save long-term for disability expenses.

Eligible individuals can set up their STABLE Account for free at [www.stableaccount.com](http://www.stableaccount.com). An initial contribution of at least \$50 is required in order to set up an account.

Since the launch on June 1, there have been almost 20,000 hits on [www.stableaccount.com](http://www.stableaccount.com), with visitors from all 50 states.

These tax-advantaged savings accounts allow families to set aside money to use on qualified expenses such as education, healthcare, housing and transportation. Earnings and distributions from an ABLÉ Account for qualified disability expenses do not count as taxable income of the contributor or eligible beneficiary.

There are minimal costs associated with maintaining a STABLE Account. Ohio residents will pay \$2.50 per month (\$30 annually) to maintain their accounts. Residents of other states will pay \$5.00 per month (\$60 annually) to maintain their accounts. Ohio residents will also have a small asset-based fee of between 0.19% and 0.34%, depending on their chosen Investment Options. Similarly, non-Ohio residents will have an asset-based fee of between 0.45% and 0.60%, depending on their chosen Investment Options.

For more information please visit [www.stableaccount.com](http://www.stableaccount.com). To view the Public Service Announcement, [click here](#).

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