



CALIFORNIA ACHIEVING A BETTER LIFE EXPERIENCE ACT BOARD

September 28, 2017

Dear CalABLE Stakeholders,

I would like to introduce myself and update you on the launch of the CalABLE program. It is my honor to serve as the Acting Executive Director for the California ABLE Act Board. I am excited to work with CalABLE staff and our vast network of passionate stakeholders to see the ABLE Act realized in California.

From the beginning, CalABLE has recognized that this program could only be shaped with the full and direct participation of our future participants and their families. Staff has learned so much in stakeholder meetings over the last year and has sincerely appreciated the chance to hear your personal stories, hopes, concerns and invaluable suggestions. We particularly wish to give thanks to the many disability advocacy and service provider groups who have hosted these stakeholder meetings on our behalf. We value the many partnerships we have made and look forward to building on these even more as we approach program launch and beyond.

We understand that many of you are concerned by recent delays in the launch of CalABLE, and we share your frustration. As we've communicated previously, we have had to navigate some unique, California-specific challenges with regard to our budget, regulatory and contracting processes – particularly as we've tried to design a program that will incorporate our participants' desires as much as possible, such as low fees. As many of you are already aware, we have had some difficulty procuring a financial vendor to administer the CalABLE Program. The firms doing this work currently are few, and those who did bid on our first request for proposals were either not able to provide all services or unable to meet the state's very high standard of care. The good news is that we feel optimistic that we will be able to bring a viable bidder before the CalABLE Board at our October meeting.

The CalABLE Board and staff remain fully committed to the implementation of this program. CalABLE's ultimate success will depend on robust participation from its participants, and we appreciate your patience and willingness to "stick with us" as we work through these issues. CalABLE staff will be reaching out to hold additional stakeholder meetings and outreach events in the coming weeks and months. I look forward to meeting many of you, and am available at any time should you have any questions or concerns – feel free to contact me at stanley.zeto@treasurer.ca.gov or (916) 653-4046.

Sincerely,

Stan Zeto
Acting Executive Director, CalABLE Act Board