

Submitter: E Blair
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Tax Expenditures
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB120
Re: Support for Individual Development Accounts in SB 120 -1

Dear Co-Chair Nathanson, Co-Chair Meek, and Members of the Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures:

I am writing to share my experiences with the Car IDA program, which I was fortunate to be a part of through CASA. Thanks to the support of the program, I was able to purchase my vehicle this year.

Words can not express how much I appreciate that these IDA programs exist, especially in today's climate of uncertainty, where so many people are struggling financially. The programs are a godsend, and I sincerely hope that IDAs will continue to receive the funding they deserve, to continue helping the lower-income members of our community to get a leg up in their lives.

For my own part, I am disabled, and it gives me peace of mind to know that I now have a reliable vehicle to get to appointments and otherwise complete my life tasks and errands, which are extra difficult for me, and would be even more difficult without reliable transportation. I never would have been able to afford a reliable and decent vehicle on my own. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart.

Going through the program took work and investment from myself, both monetarily and through the required financial counseling and education. They don't just hand over a check and have done with it - I think the program struck an excellent balance in ensuring that the participants are doing the work to ensure the funds they receive are actually going to contribute to their success. The people I worked with, initially at Save First Financial and then at CASA, went above and beyond and were so supportive and responsive to me as a participant when I had questions or needed guidance on things like car buying. I am immensely grateful to them, and I would like to give a special shoutout to Randy Lucas and Rebekah Bassett for their help. Thank you so very much.

In conclusion, during this legislative session, I urge you to continue funding IDA programs. These programs are an invaluable resource for lower-income folks, and they don't just provide participants with money; they support participants through education and work to ensure that they are successful with the monetary resources they receive.

Thank you for your consideration,

E. Blair, IDA participant