



## Expanding ABLE

The uncertainty of the last year has underscored the need for financial safety nets, which is perhaps why a majority of families tucked away their federal stimulus payments into an emergency fund rather than spending it. For some Mississippians with disabilities, however, tucking away that money wasn't an option because they weren't allowed to save it. Before we get to why that's the case, however, let me take a step back.

According to a study conducted by the National Organization on Disability during the pandemic's height, about 20 percent of workers with disabilities were laid off, compared to 14 percent of their able-bodied counterparts. This disproportionate impact was only made worse by the historic limitations put on a disabled person's ability to create an emergency fund of their own.

Prior to 2014, those with disabilities could be disqualified from accessing much-needed food, housing, and health care assistance if they had accumulated more than \$2,000 worth of savings. As a result, many with disabilities were forced to remain in poverty just to receive the public benefits they required.

In December 2014, however, Congress passed the ABLE Act, giving millions of disabled Americans a path to greater financial independence. In the years since, families have opened 82,000 ABLE accounts that hold about \$650 million in savings. But not every Mississippian living with a disability can benefit from such accounts, and I believe that

needs to change.

To be eligible for an ABLE account, the disability's onset must have occurred before the beneficiary turned 26 years old. But as Kandi Pickard, president and CEO of the National Down Syndrome Society argued: "There are many people who become disabled after age 26 who deserve the opportunity to achieve greater financial independence and self-reliance."

Who is chief among those individuals that incur disabilities in their middle years? American veterans.

That's why I am supporting the ABLE Age Adjustment Act, which has been introduced in the U.S. House and Senate. This legislation would increase the age of onset to 46 years old. By doing so, more veterans would become eligible, as would thousands of people who endured tragedy in their 30s and 40s. Moreover, the program would become easier to administer, thereby reducing management costs for states and making these plans more profitable for all beneficiaries.

I believe strongly that this legislation should advance through Congress and be signed into law by the President – and I will be fighting for that to happen.

But in the meantime, I will continue educating Mississippians about the program as currently written and encouraging families to sign up. If you believe an ABLE account would benefit you or a family member, please visit [Treasury.MS.gov/ABLE](https://Treasury.MS.gov/ABLE) to learn more or call my office at (601) 359-3600. We are



## National Iced Tea Month

June is National Iced Tea Month. In the South, every month is Sweet Tea Month. Sweet tea is also known as the "white wine of the south". We serve it with every meal, no matter what the season. Our babies have it in their bottles and sip-pee cups.

When serving as food stylist for *The Help*, I was asked to prepare some Southern dishes for several Dreamworks executives who were coming to Greenwood in preparation for the movie's filming. One special request made was for slushy iced tea – a favorite from Tate Taylor's childhood. The property master told me what she needed for me to prepare. I had no earthly idea what slushy iced tea was, but I had decided early on that I would just say I could do whatever they needed and worry about how to do it when I got home.

I remembered having a recipe for a Vodka Slush, but

ready to help more Mississippians with disabilities create a financial safety net of their own.

*Mississippi Treasurer David McRae is the 55th Treasurer for the State of Mississippi. In this role, he helps manage the state's cash flow, oversees College Savings Mississippi, and has returned more than \$20 million in unclaimed money to Mississippians. For more information, visit Treasury.MS.gov.*

knew that it never froze all the way because of the alcohol. I decided to prepare a recipe of sweet tea with lemon and freeze it in a Ziploc bag. I took it out and timed how long it took for the tea to thaw and become slushy. They loved it and Tate said it was just like he remembered from his childhood – Whew, dodged a bullet there!

I prepared a luncheon for a dozen visitors on set from Los Angeles. When asked how much sugar I put in a gallon of tea, my reply was about 2 cups. I was quickly told that no one in LA had consumed a cup of sugar in the last 10 years! I prepared both sweet tea and unsweetened tea for the guests. The sweet tea was gone in a heartbeat. If you build it, they will come. If you sweeten it, they will drink.

After several years of visiting my sister in San Francisco, I finally learned not to ask for sweet tea. They look at you like you have 4 heads. I just opened the sugar packets and tried to make my own sweet tea. It never quite tasted the same.

Hope you enjoy these tea

recipes on these hot summer days. Thanks for reading.

### SOUTHERN SWEET TEA

8 cup water, divided  
2 family size tea bags  
2 cups sugar  
Garnish: fresh mint and lemon slices

Bring 4 cups of water to a boil; remove from heat and add tea bags. Cover and steep for about 30 minutes. Add sugar to warm tea mixture and stir until dissolved. Add remaining water and chill. Serve over ice with mint and lemon slices.

### APRICOT NECTAR TEA

6 family size tea bags  
2 sprigs mint  
1 cup sugar  
1 (12 oz.) can frozen lemonade, thawed  
4 (11 oz.) cans apricot nectar

1 tsp. almond extract  
Bring 4 cups water to a rolling boil; add tea bags and mint. Cover and steep for 15 minutes; remove tea bags and mint. Stir in sugar to dissolve; add remaining ingredients and mix well. Pour into a gallon container and fill with water to make a gallon. Chill and garnish with mint.

### FRUIT TEA

2 cups water  
2 cups sugar  
4 family size tea bags  
2 cups orange juice  
1 cup lemon juice  
Simmer water and sugar for 10 minutes; remove from heat. Add tea bags and steep for 20 minutes. Pour into a gallon container and add or-

ange and lemon juices. Fill with water to make a gallon.

Garnish with lemon and orange slices.

*\*Lee Ann Fleming is a Holmes County native, food columnist and has garnered fame for her recipes featured in the film, *The Help*. Fleming can be reached at [lafkitchen@hughes.net](mailto:lafkitchen@hughes.net).*

**TUESDAY  
JUNE 8  
(CITY HALL)  
RE-ELECT  
Robin  
McCrory  
MAYOR  
LEXINGTON**

\*Paid for by McCrory for Mayor



Riley Angell  
Aaron Goldman  
August 1

**Peoples  
Drug Store**

Court Square 834-2721 Lexington

**CLEMETENE  
JACKSON  
COOPER**



Greetings to the Citizens of the City of Lexington:

I would like to Thank You for your prayers and support that you have given me in my position as Alderman-At-Large. I am humbly asking for your continued prayers, support and your votes as I seek re-election in the June 8, 2021 General Election at Lexington City Hall. I will continue to be fair, honest and compassionate as well as work hard to make sure that all citizens are afforded and productive life.



*"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."*

*Colossians 3:23-24*

On behalf of Saint James Church, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation for the amazing work done by Carolyn Riley for the City of Durant. The endless hours that you have spent working for the city and its people and the professionalism that you have portrayed has impressed our community immensely. We deem ourselves honored to have had you serve us for the past 5 years. Your diligence, self-motivation, and focus has been a source of motivation for us all and we hope that this positivity will continue to spread throughout the city. Again, we say thank you and may God continue to bless you.



Kaitlin Kimbrough of Holmes County Central High School was awarded a \$1000.00 scholarship by the Lexington Rotary Club. Rotarians making the presentation were Fran Thurmond and Charlie Mae Joiner.