



Michael W. Frerichs

ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

FEBRUARY 2019 E-NEWSLETTER

Treasurer's Note

ABLE Helping People with Disabilities

Two years ago, we in the state treasurer's office embarked on a journey to help people with disabilities.

The ABLE program – **Achieving a Better Life Experience** – helps people save their own money for their own disability-related expenses.

ABLE families needed help because an individual could only save \$2,000 without incurring federal penalties.

Today, ABLE allows an individual to set aside up to \$100,000 without jeopardizing their federal benefits. Investment growth is tax-free with qualified expenditures. Deposits also could be tax deductible.

Illinois ABLE is a prime example of not taking 'no' for an answer.

When we began, investment firms told us ABLE was impossible because the beneficiary pool was too small to make it cost effective.

So, we made the pool larger. We approached other states and encouraged them to join Illinois. Today, 14 states and the District of Columbia work with us to keep costs among the lowest in the country. This [alliance defies partisanship](#) and includes red states and blue states. It shows that progress can be made when all sides are willing to treat each other with respect.

We started slowly in 2017. Today, however, I am proud to say that our ABLE program is helping 740 individuals invest \$4.2 million.

More information is available at illinoisABLE.com or (888) 609-8683. Remember, you do not have to live in Illinois to take advantage of this wonderful program.

As treasurer, my office invests money on behalf of state taxpayers, units of local governments, and families saving for college. However, I also believe that we must invest in people. ABLE is a wonderful tool to help people invest in themselves.

ABLE is another way the Illinois State Treasurer's Office is invested in you.

Sincerely,
Michael W. Frerichs
Illinois State Treasurer



Your Money

Doing Business in Illinois

A key goal in the Illinois State Treasurer's Office is to do business with Illinois firms.

On the investment front, this includes brokerage firms, securities dealers, asset managers, banks, investment consultants, and other financial institutions.

Too often, however, institutions do not know how to approach the treasurer's office for potential work. The first step is to contact the office to submit a Capabilities Questionnaire. This provides the office with a resource to be proactive in identifying business opportunities with Illinois-based firms.

More information is available [here](#).

The treasurer's office uses outside firms for some investment services, including broker/dealer services, investment management services, and banking services.

We especially look for MWVD partners. These are firms lead by minorities, women, Veterans, or persons with a disability.

In 2014, the office used MWVD firms to invest \$603 million. By recruiting other firms to apply, we now invest \$35 *billion* through MWVD firms.

Investing in Illinois is a priority for the state treasurer's office.



Investing in Your Community

Community Uplift Program

A key way the treasurer's office invests in Illinois is through local banks, savings and loans, and credit unions.

The treasurer's office deposits money into local financial institutions and agrees to below-market interest rates. In turn, these institutions agree to lend money into the community at below-market rates. Essentially, it becomes the least expensive way to borrow money for those who qualify.

One of the newer programs to leverage this dynamic is the Community Uplift Program. The Community Uplift Program provides money to lending institutions specifically to fund business growth or expansion in areas facing economic challenges.

Program details, including current rates, can be found [here](#). Interested business and banking partners also can call (217) 558-6217 for more information.

The Illinois Treasurer is the state's chief investment officer. A key objective in Treasurer Michael Frerichs' office is to invest money in a manner that supports community development while meeting the primary investment objectives of safety, liquidity and return on investment. The Community Uplift Program is one effort to meet this key objective.



Cream of the Crop

Pride in Agriculture

It is not too early to start planning for the 2019 Cream of the Crop photo contest.

The annual photo contest will open in March. Taking out the camera today, however, invites student photographers to capture activity during the winter and prior to planting.

The photo contest is part of the Illinois State Treasurer's Ag Invest program. Grade school and high school students are invited to submit innovative and scenic photos that depict their vision of agriculture in our state.

Winning photos are used in informational materials for the Ag Invest program, the Ag Invest calendar, and featured at the Illinois State Fair. For contest rules, click [here](#).

Ag Invest is one of the nation's largest agricultural linked-deposit programs. It helps hundreds of Illinois farmers and agriculture professionals. The treasurer's office, through Ag Invest, partners with eligible lenders to offer farmers annual or long-term loans which can be used for operating costs, equipment purchases, construction-related expenses, and livestock purchases.

Want more information on the loan program? Call (217) 558-6217 or click [here](#).



On the Horizon

Treasurer Frerichs Celebrates Black History Month

February is Black History Month, a month-long remembrance of people, achievements, and events that have shaped the African-American community. Treasurer Frerichs will host a celebration in Chicago that will take place beginning at Noon on Wednesday, Feb. 27th on the concourse level of the James R. Thompson Center.

All are welcome.

Additional details are available on the Treasurer's [Facebook page](#).