

## Sen. Burr Thanks Charlotte Dad In Opening Statement For Subcommittee on Taxation & IRS Oversight He

By Administrator

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RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - At a Senate committee meeting on Wednesday, North Carolina Sen. Richard Burr commented on the subject of helping families with disabilities.

In his comments, Sen. Burr thanked Charlotte-area father Robert D'Amelio, who is dad to two children with autism. Sen. Burr's prepared opening statement is below.

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Thank you, Chairman Casey and Ranking Member Enzi, for holding this important hearing on the ABLE Act. I particularly want to thank you, Chairman Casey, as well as Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers, for being such passionate advocates for the ABLE Act. You along with Congressmen Ander Crenshaw, Chris Van Hollen and Pete Sessions have been tremendous partners in this effort, and I cannot think of a more energetic or more devoted team for getting the ABLE Act done.

Mr. Chairman, as has already been said, the ABLE Act enjoys unprecedented bipartisan support. Over three-quarters of the Congress has now put their name on this bill as cosponsors, and if we had a vote on it today, I would venture to say that the ABLE Act would pass Congress unanimously. And the reason is simple -- it just makes sense.

It's hard for me to find a reason why anyone would want to get in the way of a bill that allows the parents of a disabled child the opportunity to save their own money for their child's future and to give that child a shot at financial independence. As a father, I know that a piece of the American Dream is what all of us want for our children. As our inspiring witnesses will share with us today, this dream for themselves and for their children is no less powerful.

So, I hope Mr. Chairman that the ABLE Act does not get lost in the shuffle. It's unfortunate but in Washington we spend most of our time arguing over the issues that divide us. For heaven's sakes, let's pass a bill that we all support, that we all know is sound public policy, and that we all believe will make a world of difference to families who are simply asking us for hope. We've been working together in good faith with all stakeholders to improve and perfect this bill for 8 years, and its time has come. Let's pass the ABLE Act, and let's do it now.

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Also, Mr. Chairman, I just want to briefly welcome a fellow North Carolinian, Robert D'Amelio, to the hearing today. Robert lives in Charlotte, and he and his wife, Christi, are the proud parents of three beautiful children: Nicholas (18 years), Christopher (15 years) and Lindsey (10 years). He volunteers his time with the Boy Scouts of America and is a leader in the autism community in Charlotte, as two of his three children are affected by autism.

Bob, I just want to personally thank you and Christi for traveling up to Washington to testify today about the challenges your family has faced and will continue to face as a family affected by autism. I know the hopes and fears we have for our children can be profound and intensely personal, so I admire your courage – and the courage of all of our witnesses -- in coming here to speak about your deepest hopes and fears publicly. It will help Congress better understand your unique challenges, and I truly believe that public policy in this area will be better because of your testimony here today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me the opportunity to speak.