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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Henry McMaster Proclaims April 4, 2019, as Advocacy Day for Access & Independence
Disability advocates gather at the SC State House to further disability rights, access, and inclusion

Columbia, S.C. (March 28, 2019) – On April 4, disability advocates from across South Carolina will gather at the State House to unlock barriers to employment, transportation, and public access. In honor of this event, South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster has proclaimed April 4, 2019, as “Advocacy Day for Access & Independence,” and encourages all South Carolinians to work together to break down barriers that hinder people with disabilities from becoming fully independent participants in our communities.

Advocacy Day for Access & Independence will allow members of the disability community the opportunity to speak with their legislators about Independent Living in South Carolina. The event will also include guest speakers with disabilities, their political allies, and disability advocates. “The voices of the disability community will not be minimized in our efforts to create greater access to transportation, employment, and public access,” says Robbie Kopp, director of advocacy and community access at Able SC. “People with disabilities are capable, contributing members of society worthy of full access and inclusion in all South Carolina communities.”

Advocacy Day for Access & Independence was created as part of the State Plan on Independent Living with support of 24 organizations statewide in an effort to eliminate barriers that prevent people with disabilities from having equal access and opportunity. State agencies in South Carolina lack Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinators to address ADA complaints which leads to increased intervention by federal agencies like the Department of Justice. Policies regarding people with disabilities across our state encourage dependence on state programs and the government instead of promoting independence and inclusion.

South Carolinians with disabilities are often discriminated against in education, employment, voting, parenting, and daily life. Advocacy Day for Access & Independence will shine a light on this in hopes of improving the lives of all South Carolinians. “South Carolina can be a better place for people with disabilities to live, work, and play. Just like citizens without disabilities, people with disabilities have the same rights to equal opportunities. However, those rights are often overlooked for the disability community,” says Kimberly Tissot, executive director of Able SC. Search #BarrierFreeSC on Facebook for updates. The event will begin at 10:00 am on the north steps of the State House and will end around

12:30 pm. Interested participants may register online at www.unlockingbarriers-sc.org or by calling (800) 681-6805.

As Event Planner, Able South Carolina's Director of Advocacy & Community Access, Robbie Kopp is available for interviews and further comment leading up to the event.

ABOUT ABLE SOUTH CAROLINA

Able SC is a change agent committed to fostering an inclusive society that empowers individuals with disabilities to live fully-engaged and self-directed lives. Able SC is an organization lead by individuals with disabilities that challenges stereotypes, protects disability rights, and champions social reform. To learn more about Able SC's programs and services, please visit www.able-sc.org.

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