



February 10, 2022

The Honorable Bobby Scott, Chair  
U.S. House Committee on Education & Labor  
1201 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx, Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on Education & Labor  
2462 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair  
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor, & Pensions  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Burr, Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education,  
Labor & Pensions  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Foxx, Chairwoman Murray and Ranking Member Burr:

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for Federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration, and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. To support these goals and ensure that students with disabilities have every opportunity to succeed in school and beyond, Congress must deliver on its commitment to funding education costs for infants, toddlers, children, youth and young adults with disabilities. As co-chairs of the CCD Education Task Force, we write in strong support of the reintroduction of the *Funding Early Childhood is the Right IDEA Act (H.R. 6532/S.3544)*. This bipartisan legislation would ensure Congress' commitment to adequately support the education of our youngest children with disabilities.

Federal investments have not kept pace with the number of children with disabilities or those who are at-risk of having disabilities and may require services ages 0-5. State-identified programs funded through Part B, Section 619 and Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) Act - which assist states with early intervention services for children with disabilities ages 3-5 and 0-3, respectively - are underfunded, despite high demand. In fact, as the U.S. Department of Education recently disclosed in the *43rd Annual Report to Congress*, there were 427,234 infants and toddlers birth through age 2 served under IDEA, Part C, representing 3.7% of children nationwide (up from 2.9% in 2014) and there were 806,319 children ages 3 through 5 served under Part B.<sup>1</sup> As the number of children served under Part B, Section 619 and Part C increases, additional funding is needed to assure states are able to continue to serve these children.

Furthermore, while early childhood education programs work to address anticipated instructional loss, mental health impacts, and other adverse pandemic-related impacts of COVID-19 for children with

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education, 43rd Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2021, at: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/2021-individuals-with-disabilities-education-act-annual-report-to-congress/>

disabilities, the need for additional funding is critical and cannot be overstated. A significant increase in federal funding would ensure that programs are able to meet this increasing demand for early intervention services for young children due to the pandemic.

We thank Representatives Mark DeSaulnier, Rodney Davis, and Jared Huffman, and Senators Maggie Hassan, Bob Casey, Chris Murphy and Chris Van Hollen for their leadership and continued support of individuals with disabilities. We look forward to working with you and the House Committee on Education and Labor and Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions to advance this legislation to provide a meaningful increase to education programs that support children with disabilities. Thank you for considering this request. Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to any of the CCD Education Task Force co-chairs listed below.

Sincerely,

CCD Education Task Force Co-Chairs:

Bart Devon, National Down Syndrome Society

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Center for Learner Equity

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Kim Musheno, Autism Society of America

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CC:

Representative Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA)

Representative Rodney Davis (R-IL)

Representative Jared Huffman (D-CA)

Senator Maggie Hassan (D-NH)

Senator Bob Casey (D-PA)

Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT)

Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)

*The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. The Education Task Force of CCD monitors federal legislation and regulations that address the educational needs of children and youth with disabilities and their families, including regulatory efforts under federal law such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Education Task Force advocates for high expectations for children with disabilities under these and other laws.*

[www.c-c-d.org](http://www.c-c-d.org)