

May 21, 2013

House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative,

The undersigned represent a coalition of education organizations dedicated to advocating for Congress to fulfill its promise and fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). **This year, however, we join together to oppose all of the proposed cuts to critical education programs in the 302(b) allocation for the House Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations Subcommittee for Fiscal Year 2014, including the \$2.04 billion cut to IDEA Part B Grants to States.** The proposed allocation deeply cuts every education program, many of which benefit children and youth with disabilities. This means that these students will suffer twice and three times over – losing services in many areas - and likely moving further and further away from achieving the success they deserve. While our organizations advocate for many programs that help all children, for the purposes of this letter we join together to highlight the importance of all education programs to children with disabilities. Merely, preserving IDEA funding is not enough to increase student achievement for children with disabilities because they benefit from many education programs that help all students.

Today, more than ever, children and youth with disabilities are integrated throughout our nation's public schools. Indeed, almost 60% of children and youth with disabilities spend 80% of their day or more learning alongside their general education peers.<sup>1</sup> This means that today's children and youth with disabilities benefit widely from programs that benefit all students, including Title I, Career and Technical State Grants, programs supporting English Language Learners (ELL) as well as IDEA. While children who are eligible for IDEA services still need those services to access the general education curriculum and demonstrate what they learn, they also have many other needs that are currently served by other critical education investments.

Here are just a few of the statistics about the interconnectedness of our education system and how cutting programs impacts children and youth with disabilities:

- Of the roughly 6.5 million children and youth with disabilities who are eligible for IDEA, at least 2.5 million of them are also eligible for Title I services;<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. *The Condition of Education*, Table A-9-2. Percentage distribution of students aged 6-21 served under IDEA Part B, by educational environment and disability type; Selected school years 1990-91 through 2009-10. September 2011. Accessed on 5/20/13  
<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/tables/table-cwd-2.asp>

<sup>2</sup> National Title I Association, National Association of State Directors of Special Education. *Recommendations for Improved Coordination between Title I and IDEA*. June 2011. Accessed 5/20/2013.  
<http://www.nasdse.org/Portals/0/Documents/Title%20I%20and%20IDEA%20Coordination%20Report%20June%201%202011.pdf>

- **The House Labor/HHS/Education allocation will cut Title I grants to LEAs by approximately \$2.56 billion.**
- On average, approximately 9% of all ELLs are also eligible for IDEA;<sup>3</sup>
  - **The House Labor/HHS/Education allocation will cut Title III ELL Grants to States by \$129.1 million.**
- Nationally, in the high schools that offer career and technical programs to all students, 18.5% of students enrolled in these specialized programs are students with disabilities;<sup>4</sup>
  - **The House Labor/HHS/Education allocation will cut Career and Technical Education State Grants by \$198 million.**
- Approximately 6.5 million students ages 6-21 receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
  - **The House Labor/HHS/Education allocation will cut IDEA Part B Grants to States by \$2.04 billion.**
  - **Congress has never fulfilled its' promise to fully fund IDEA. For fiscal year 2013, federal funding is only 14.9% of the promised 40%. Under the proposed fiscal year 2014 allocation, full funding will drop to 11.9%.**

These statistics demonstrate that although IDEA is the cornerstone program for ensuring that children and youth with disabilities receive the supports and services they are entitled to under the law, children and youth with disabilities also benefit from and will be hurt by cuts to all education programs – especially deep cuts like those proposed this year. Indeed, the proposed Labor/HHS/Education allocation is 18.6 percent below the final FY 2013 sequester level and 22.2 percent below the FY 13 pre-sequester Continuing Resolution level. These extreme cuts in funding to all education programs will hurt all students, and many of those with disabilities will be hurt twice and three times over because of the across the board cuts to education programs.

In sum, this budget will deny all of our nation's students the resources they need to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. On behalf of children and youth with disabilities, teachers, administrators, specialized instructional support professionals, and parents, we urge you to vote against these devastating cuts.

Sincerely,

American Association of School Administrators  
 American Federation of Teachers  
 American Speech Language Hearing Association  
 Council for Exceptional Children

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<sup>3</sup> Keller-Allen, Sandra. *English Language Learners with Disabilities: Identification and other State Policies and Issues. Project Forum.* August 2006.

<sup>4</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. *Table H1: Percentage of public high schools that are regular, career/technical, and other special focus, and various characteristics of each school type.* 2008. Accessed 5/20/2013 <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ctes/tables/h01.asp>

Council of the Great City Schools  
National Association of Elementary School Principals  
National Association of State Directors of Special Education  
National Association of Secondary School Principals  
National Education Association  
National School Boards Association