

Senator Pat Roberts
109 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Senator Chris VanHollen
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Jared Huffman
1527 House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative John Katko
2457 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative David McKinley
2239 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 25, 2019

Representative Brian Fitzpatrick
1722 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Glenn Thompson
400 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Joe Neguse
1419 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Dean Phillips
1305 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Kurt Schrader
2431 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: Support for IDEA Full Funding Act

Dear Members of Congress,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing the IDEA Full Funding Coalition, a group of education organizations dedicated to fulfilling the funding promise for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), we write to express our strong support for the IDEA Full Funding Act, set to be introduced in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives the week of March 25, 2019.

We thank you for your continued leadership on this important issue, and for making the latest version of this bill both bipartisan and bicameral. Since its inception in 1975, IDEA has protected students with disabilities by ensuring access to a free appropriate public education. At the time the statute was enacted, Congress promised to pay 40 percent of the National Average per Pupil Expenditure. While special education funding has received significant increases over the past 18 years, federal funding has leveled off recently and has even been cut. The closest the federal government has come to reaching its 40 percent commitment was 18 percent in 2005.

Investing in IDEA, a federal flagship formula program designed to help level the education playing field for students with disabilities, is an investment in our nation's students and their future. It indicates that Congress is serious in keeping its word to help school districts support all students. Our organizations strongly support full federal funding for IDEA. IDEA is the major—but not sole—vehicle for providing education to students with disabilities. In fact, students with disabilities are general

education students first, with nearly two-thirds of students with disabilities spending at least 80 percent of their time in a general education setting.

Your bill is an affirmation of the importance of Congress acting to keep its word, honoring its commitment to provide 40 percent of the additional costs associated with educating students with disabilities. Thank you for your leadership on the full funding of IDEA, and we very much appreciate your work to support efforts in Congress to move toward meeting its IDEA funding commitment. Please direct any questions to Noelle Ellerson Ng (nellerson@asa.org).

Sincerely,

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
American Dance Therapy Association
American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees
American Federation of Teachers
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Association of Educational Service Agencies
Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents
Association of School Business Officials International
Council for Exceptional Children
Council of Administrators of Special Education
Council of Great City Schools
Learning Disabilities Association of America
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Association of State Directors of Special Education
National Center for Learning Disabilities
National Education Association
National PTA
National Rural Education Advocacy Consortium
National Rural Education Association
National School Boards Association
School Social Work Association of America
The ARC of the United States