



April 8, 2015

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
The Honorable Patty Murray  
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

We write on behalf of the Education Taskforce of the Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities. We greatly appreciate your bipartisan efforts to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) through the introduction of the Every Child Achieves Act (ECAA) and the scheduled Committee mark-up on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

As the premier coalition of disability groups in the nation we write regarding a concern we have about potential amendments to ECAA. In strong bi-partisan fashion you have included many provisions in ECAA that are beneficial to all children with disabilities. As the Committee considers the mark-up of ECAA *we urge you to reject any amendment that provides special treatment or consideration to children with any one specific disability.*

The great strength of the American system of education is that, through State and local efforts, reinforced by ESEA and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), we as a nation have made a commitment to educate every single one of our children and to provide them with the opportunities that a public education affords all children.

Since the passage of ESEA in 1965 and IDEA in 1975, we have dedicated our educational efforts to providing equal access to public education for all children. We believe that all children, regardless of disability, must be provided with the instruction, services, and resources they need to achieve. To specify one subset of children or one type of disability in ESEA would create a precedence that undermines the effort Congress has made; with our support, to better align *all* federal laws and support the academic success of all children, including those with disabilities.

*As you consider amendments during the mark-up of ECAA, we urge you, in the bi-partisan fashion that produced this bill, to reject efforts to create dissonance among and between groups of students with disabilities by voting to defeat amendments that call for using resources for one group of children with disabilities before the needs of others.*

Sincerely,

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

*The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities is a coalition of national consumer, advocacy, provider and professional organizations headquartered in Washington, D.C. Since 1973, the CCD has advocated on behalf of people of all ages with physical and mental disabilities and their families. CCD has worked to achieve federal legislation and regulations that assure that the 54 million children and adults with disabilities are fully integrated into the mainstream of society. For additional information, please contact:*

Katy Neas, Easter Seals	202.347.3066	kneas@easterseals.com
Laura Kaloi, Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates	202.349.2310	lkaloi@wpllc.net
Kim Musheno, Association of University Centers on Disability	301.588.8252	kmusheno@aucd.org
Cindy Smith, Nat'l Association of Councils on Disabilities	202.506.5813	<a href="mailto:csmith@nacdd.org">csmith@nacdd.org</a> Developmental