



For Immediate Release

February 7, 2017

**Statement from Mimi Corcoran, NCLD CEO and President
on the Confirmation of Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education**

“In advance of the U.S. Senate vote today to confirm Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education, the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) raised serious concerns about the nominee’s commitment to uphold federal civil rights law, notably the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the 40-year civil rights law that has provided students with disabilities the right to a free, appropriate, public education.

Throughout the nominations process, we raised important and appropriate questions regarding Ms. DeVos’s apparent unfamiliarity with IDEA and called for her to withdraw her significant financial holdings in a company that claims to “treat” ADHD, to avoid a conflict of interest and the appearance of impropriety.

Today, after unprecedented debate, the Senate voted narrowly to confirm Ms. DeVos as Secretary of Education. While our concerns remain, we must now look ahead to the important policy issues facing our nation's schools. On behalf of the 1 in 5 children living with learning and attention issues, I reiterate our commitment to work with the Secretary and her department to ensure that children with learning disabilities receive supports and services to which they are entitled by law.

Upholding current law is an important starting point, and I assure you NCLD will be vigilant in our defense of past and future progress – maintaining the status quo is not enough.

NCLD will work with the Secretary and other policymakers to secure appropriate, additional protections for people with learning disabilities. Specifically, we will advocate for additional policies that empower parents and students, transform schools and, ultimately, improve outcomes for children with learning and attention issues. Our [key policy priorities](#) include recommendations to expand early screening programs, provide strong oversight of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), pass the bipartisan RISE Act and maintain and enhance legal protections.

As a nation, we can and must continue to make progress. Today, high school graduation rates for children with learning disabilities are at an all-time high at 64 percent. The numbers are encouraging, but they are still far too low. We can do better and we look forward to working with policymakers that share our values and our hopes for our children.”

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