



For Immediate Release
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NCLD Commends House, Senate for Introducing Bi-Partisan RISE Act to Ease Transition to College for Students with Disabilities

The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) commends the leaders in Congress who introduced the Respond, Innovate, Succeed and Empower Act (RISE Act) in the House and the Senate this week – Senator Casey (D-PA), Senator Hatch (R-UT), Senator Hassan (D-NH), Senator Cassidy (R-LA), Congresswoman Bonamici (D-OR), and Congressman Bucshon (R-IN).

NCLD is proud to endorse the RISE Act, a bicameral and bipartisan legislation that marks a necessary policy change to remove barriers and increase opportunities for college-seeking students with disabilities.

“The transition from K-12 public schools to college can be a stumbling block for many students with disabilities,” says Mimi Corcoran, President & CEO of NCLD. “All of a sudden, the same services that supported students with disabilities throughout their K-12 education are much harder to find and are often denied to students who cannot afford to undergo a new evaluation to provide ‘proof’ of their lifelong disability.”

If enacted, the RISE Act would solve significant problems plaguing college-bound students and their families—specifically, centralizing information about college disability services and the requirements for seeking accommodations. In addition, the RISE Act allows students to use existing documentation – including IEPs and 504 plans – to demonstrate their disability, avoiding the burden of undergoing a new, costly and time-consuming evaluation.

“The RISE Act clears the path for students with disabilities to get the support they need to thrive and succeed in college. No student with a documented disability should have to incur additional costs to prove it when they get to college and I commend the National Center for Learning Disabilities for working with me on solving this critical issue,” stated Senator Casey.

“We need to give students with disabilities every opportunity to succeed and that includes removing unnecessary obstacles,” Hatch said. “I’ve always sought to champion the rights of those with disabilities. I authored the Americans with Disabilities Act that fundamentally changed the way we treat disability accommodations. The RISE Act carries on this legacy by eliminating barriers for students with disabilities so they can reach their educational goals.”

“We are at our strongest when we fully include the talent and energy of all people in our society and our economy,” Senator Hassan said. “The bipartisan RISE Act is critical to making that vision a reality by removing burdensome and unnecessary barriers for students who

experience disabilities during their transition from K-12 to higher education. I will continue to work across party lines to move this important bill forward and expand opportunity for students who experience disabilities.”

“Dyslexics can be as successful as any other student if receiving the curriculum that addresses their learning needs,” said Dr. Cassidy. “We must remove barriers and give the appropriate support.”

“Too many students with disabilities continue to face barriers to success in higher education,” said Congresswoman Bonamici, a leader on the House Education Committee. “When students transition from high school to higher education, they shouldn’t face hurdles when seeking the support they need. I am pleased to partner with Rep. Bucshon to advance commonsense, bipartisan legislation that will streamline the process for receiving accommodations in college. Ultimately, this will help more students get the support they need, earn a degree or credential, and enter the workforce with the skills to succeed.”

“The RISE Act is a critical step toward breaking down barriers in higher education and helping students with disabilities to become truly successful in college and beyond. The RISE Act pushes college and universities to put in place more welcoming and accepting policies and practice for students in disabilities. In return, the school has a great opportunity to help their faculty gain more knowledge, expertise, and understanding to better serve students with disabilities on their campuses,” says Corcoran. “NCLD is proud to have worked with leaders in Congress to introduce this legislation and stands ready to support this bill as it moves forward,” concluded Corcoran.

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The mission of the National Center for Learning Disabilities is to improve the lives of the 1 in 5 children and adults nationwide with learning and attention issues—by empowering parents and young adults, transforming schools and advocating for equal rights and opportunities. We’re working to create a society in which every individual possesses the academic, social and emotional skills needed to succeed in school, at work and in life. For more information, visit nclد.org.