



November 30, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education & Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt, Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro, Ranking Member Cole, Chair Murray, and Ranking Member Blunt,

As you work to finalize the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 appropriation bill for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education (L-HHS-ED), the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD), which represents the 1 in 5 individuals with learning and attention issues, urges you to put children, their families, and schools first by increasing spending levels for the programs that support them.

Children with learning and attention issues have brain-based issues that may cause trouble in reading, writing, math, organization, concentration, listening comprehension, social skills, motor skills or a combination of these. These children are in every classroom across the country and spend most of their time in general education settings, while many also receive specialized instruction and support through our nation's special education program (the Individual with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA). Research confirms that when provided the right services and supports, children with learning and attention issues can and do thrive in school and life. Yet, our nation's schools are struggling to serve these students and will continue to face challenges during and beyond the pandemic. There is a great need for continued investment from the federal government. We urge you to adopt the following recommendations as you finalize the FY 2022 appropriations bill.

Maintain Funding for & Report Language on LD Research

We were pleased to see that the FY 2022 House appropriations bill included report language supporting the use of National Institute of Health (NIH) funds for learning disabilities (LD)

research. The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) within NIH has been the leading source of funding for LD research for decades and has yielded groundbreaking research in the science of reading and other areas. The U.S. House of Representatives and Senate recognized the importance of this research and included report language in their FY 22 funding bills:

Learning Disabilities Research Centers and Learning Disabilities Innovation Hubs.—The Committee is increasingly concerned with the decline in achievement for students with disabilities and recognizes the need for continued research and improved interventions, particularly in light of the COVID–19 crisis, which has led to significant loss of in-person instruction for many students. The Committee recognizes the importance of NICHD’s funding of Learning Disabilities Research Centers and Learning Disabilities Innovation Hubs, which are the only source of Federal funding available to researchers interested in exploring child development and learning disabilities to conduct randomized control trials and explore the relationships between different variables at work. While learning disabilities do impact an individual’s education and academic achievement, these disorders are brain-based, and so clinical research using the latest technology and advances in neuroscience is essential. To continue robust research into language, reading development, learning disabilities, and disorders that adversely affect the development of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and mathematics abilities, the Committee urges NICHD to continue its investment in its Learning Disabilities Research Centers and Learning Disabilities Innovation Hubs ([PAGE 127-128](#))

We urge you to continue supporting NIH and NICHD in FY 2022 and to include this report language in the final bill to signal the importance of scientific research on learning disabilities. Specifically, as NIH continues to see increases in its annual appropriation, we urge you to increase NICHD and maintain funding for the Learning Disabilities Research Centers’ (LDRCs)/Innovation Hubs Program, which have received approximately \$8M per year in 5-year grant cycles over the last 25+ years.

Increase Funding for Critical Education Programs

Furthermore, to support students with learning disabilities, their parents, and the educators who work with them, NCLD urges you to pass a funding bill that increases investments in our public schools through the following programs:

- Fund the **Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Grants to States** at \$15.5 billion;
- Fund **IDEA Part B Section 619** at \$503 million;
- Fund **IDEA Part C** at \$732 million;

- Fund **IDEA Part D** (National Activities) in the following amounts:
 - State Personnel Development: \$39 million
 - Technical Assistance and Development: \$49 million
 - Personnel Preparation: \$250 million
 - Parent Training and Information Centers: \$33 million
 - Media and Technology: \$32 million
- Fund **Title I in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** at \$36.5 billion
- Fund **Title II in ESSA Part A** at \$2.2 billion;
- Fund **Title III in ESSA** at \$2 billion;
- Fund **Title IV Part A in ESSA** at \$1.32 billion;
- Fund **Title IV Part B in ESSA** at \$2.5 billion;
- Fund **Title IV - Part E in ESSA** at \$17 million;
- Fund the **Institute of Education Sciences** to at \$814 million, including \$65 million for National Center for Special Education Research (NCSE); and
- Fund the **U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights** at \$145 million.

The Critical and Time-Sensitive Nature of Passing a Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations Bill

NCLD urges swift action from Congress to pass the FY 2022 appropriations bill. The ramifications of failing to do so would be devastating on the education of students with disabilities across the country. Funding the government through CRs does not allow schools and districts to budget effectively if they do not know how much funding they will have in the next school year. The federal government has underinvested in education due to tight caps on non-defense discretionary funding in recent years. The pandemic has only exacerbated the needs of students and educational inequities facing schools.

Thank you for your consideration and NCLD looks forward to working with Congress as you move forward with the FY 2022 appropriations process. Please feel free to contact me at lkubatzky@nclد.org with any questions.

Sincerely,



Lindsay Kubatzky
Director of Policy & Advocacy
National Center for Learning Disabilities