
Education Appropriations Committee

HJM 4020

Brief Description: Petitioning Congress to fully fund forty percent of the costs of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Sponsors: Representatives Dickerson, Quall, Darneille, Maxwell, Conway, Simpson, Kagi, Kenney, Carlyle, Rolfes and Moeller.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Petitions the President, Congress, and Secretary of Education of the United States of America to increase funding for special education, as provided for in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), to 40 percent of total special education costs experienced by the states.

Hearing Date: 1/19/10

Staff: Ben Rarick (786-7349).

Background:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the United States. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), federal special education funds are distributed through state grant programs and several discretionary grant programs. IDEA authorizes grants to state and local education agencies to offset part of the costs of the K-12 education needs of children with disabilities. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth to 2-year-olds) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (3-year-olds to 21-year-olds) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B. Part B comprises the vast majority of the federal funding under IDEA.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In the IDEA legislation, Congress set a target for the federal contribution to special education spending equal to 40 percent of the estimated cost of educating children with disabilities. Various entities have estimated Congress's progress toward this goal over time. For example, the New America Foundation has estimated that Congress's contribution to special education excess costs nationwide has never exceeded 18 percent of expenditures.

According to F-196 financial reports from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, school districts spent approximately \$1.2 billion on special education services in the 2008-09 school year. During the 2009 fiscal year, the Legislature appropriated approximately \$220 million in federal special education funds. Using these data, the federal contribution to Washington special education expenditures would be approximately 18 percent. Additionally, federal IDEA funding has increased significantly since the 2008-09 school year.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature petitions the President, Congress, and Secretary of Education of the United States of America to increase funding for special education, as provided for in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), to 40 percent of total special education costs experienced by the states.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.