
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8023

State of Washington 61st Legislature 2010 Regular Session

By Senators McAuliffe, Kohl-Welles, and Kauffman

1 TO THE HONORABLE BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND
2 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO ARNE DUNCAN, SECRETARY OF
5 THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION:

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
7 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
8 represent and petition as follows:

9 WHEREAS, We have witnessed a revolution in promoting, protecting,
10 and advancing the education rights of students with disabilities since
11 Congress originally enacted Public Law 94-142, The Education for All
12 Handicapped Children Act in 1975, later to be known as the Individuals
13 with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA; and

14 WHEREAS, IDEA has helped millions of children with special needs
15 receive a quality education; and

16 WHEREAS, When Congress enacted the predecessor legislation to IDEA
17 in 1975, the federal government was to pay up to forty percent of each
18 state's "excess cost" of educating children with disabilities; and

19 WHEREAS, Appropriations for IDEA have increased over the last

1 decade, however, federal funding for IDEA has never exceeded eighteen
2 percent of the states' cost; and

3 WHEREAS, In the current economic downturn, with states facing
4 billions of dollars in funding shortfalls, this long-term federal
5 practice of failing to maximize federal IDEA funding is straining the
6 budgets of school districts and states since local communities and
7 states are forced to pay a higher proportion of special education
8 costs; and

9 WHEREAS, It is time for the federal government to pay its fair
10 share of the costs of IDEA and fulfill its commitment to students with
11 disabilities, their families, and the states and school districts that
12 provide the students with a free and appropriate public education;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that Congress
14 pass and the President sign federal legislation to fully fund forty
15 percent of the costs of IDEA, recognizing that some types of
16 disabilities are much more expensive to address than others and that
17 the distribution of children with severe and more expensive
18 disabilities may cluster in some areas that have outstanding medical
19 facilities or exemplary programs for specific disabilities.

20 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
21 transmitted to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United
22 States, Arne Duncan, Secretary of the United States Department of
23 Education, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of
24 the House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the
25 State of Washington.

--- END ---