



## NORTHERN CALIFORNIA YOUTH POLICY COALITION

April 19, 2024

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
United States State \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. Capitol, Room \_\_\_\_\_  
Washington, DC 20004

### **Re: IDEA Full Funding Act (S.2217/H.R.4519) – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator/Congressman/woman \_\_\_\_\_,

The Northern California Youth Policy Coalition (NCYPC) writes to express our support for the IDEA Full Funding Act (S.2217/H.R.4519).

The Northern California Youth Policy Coalition represents youth from over thirty counties across Northern California from the North Coast to the North State to Sacramento. We seek to give a voice to rural youth who feel unheard and a platform to come together to advocate for issues that are most important to our rural youth in Northern California. Our main objective is to ensure that the youth voices of this region are heard on local, regional and state levels, where decisions make a direct impact on our rural communities.

In 1975, Congress passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The intent was to ensure that every student received a free appropriate public education without placing an outsized financial burden on states. IDEA assumes that, on average, the cost of educating a child with disabilities is twice the cost of educating a non-disabled student. Congress pledged that the federal government would pay 40% of the excess cost to provide special education and related services. However, today, only 13% of IDEA is fully funded. Throughout its almost 50 years of existence, IDEA has never come close to reaching the 40% full funding threshold promised by the government.

IDEA supports over 7 million disabled children across the country. The persistent lack of adequate funding for IDEA from the federal government places an extra financial responsibility on states, local school districts, taxpayers, and ultimately families. They must cover essential services and beneficial school programs for students with disabilities. IDEA helps schools better prepare students with disabilities for future employment and an opportunity for independent living. IDEA intended to ensure that states could provide appropriate education for students with disabilities. However, due to the critical lack of funding that Congress has provided for IDEA, this goal has not been fully realized.

For these reasons, the Northern California Youth Policy Coalition urges your support of the IDEA Full Funding Act. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bode Gower,  
Chair

Northern California Youth Policy Coalition (NCYPC)

***ORGANIZED VOICES FOR RURAL NORTHERN CALIFORNIA YOUTH***