



December 4, 2025

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
730 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jared Huffman  
2330 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Van Hollen and Representative Huffman:

The National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) works to create a world where individuals with Down syndrome thrive. We write today in strong support of the *IDEA Full Funding Act* (S. 1277/H.R. 2598), which would put the federal government on track to fulfill their promise of funding 40% of the excess costs for states to provide special education over the next 10 years.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was signed into law in 1975 and guarantees students with disabilities a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is responsible for distributing funds appropriated by Congress, and state and local educational agencies are expected to provide the rest of the funding. When IDEA was originally passed, the federal government promised to fund 40% of the average per-pupil expenditure, but they have consistently fallen short on this promise. Congress currently has appropriated less than 13% of the cost to provide special education to school aged children for Fiscal Year 2025.

The IDEA Full Funding Act will establish a glidepath for Congress to follow over the next 10 years to fulfill their promise of providing 40% of the average per pupil expenditure for special education costs. Full federal funding will lead to stronger and more robust special education programs by providing students with Down syndrome and other disabilities with improved access to accommodations, specialized instruction, and other related services.

NDSS strives to ensure all individuals with Down syndrome are assured of their human rights and valued by a more inclusive society. We thank you for your leadership on this issue and urge Congress to take swift action to improve educational outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kandi Pickard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Kandi Pickard  
President and CEO  
National Down Syndrome Society

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