

Support Robust Funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Please co-sponsor the IDEA Full Funding Act (H.R. 4519/ S. 2217) to help ensure access to occupational therapy services for students with disabilities.

Discussion Points

- Occupational therapy is one of the related services provided to students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
- Students with disabilities may receive occupational therapy services, which focus on helping students access all parts of their school day: academics, play, self-regulation, social participation, self-care skills (feeding and eating, clothing management, etc), and transition/work skills.
- Congress, through the IDEA pledged to fund 40% of the cost to states and local governments of educating a student with disabilities. However, Congress has never met that commitment. Congressional funding for IDEA on average has not exceeded 18%.
- American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) has always advocated for students with disabilities and their ability to access their education through special education and related services like occupational therapy since the “Great Recession” of 2008, 29 states provided less school funding per student, according to the most recent data available. Tighter state budgets have made the cap in the federal share of IDEA all the more important.
- In a survey AOTA conducted with similar organizations a few years ago, 83% of respondents said budget cuts impacted the delivery of special education services, 82% stated there were “too few personnel to meet the needs of students with disabilities” and 78% said the cuts increased their caseload.
- Congress needs to provide adequate funding for the IDEA to ensure students with disabilities have the quality related services to provide them access to the general education curriculum through special education.

Your Ask

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