



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES

Statement Upon Introduction of the AIM Higher Act of 2018

Washington, DC, July 25, 2018 --The Education Task Force of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) is pleased to see the introduction of the Aim Higher Act, a comprehensive reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA), that includes many of the recommendations of the task force intended to increase the number of students with disabilities able to matriculate and be successful in college or universities.

Many colleges and universities face challenges in supporting students who are unaware of their rights and responsibilities regarding accommodations and in providing accommodations, including services that involve specialized knowledge. Faculty and staff are often unaware of their legal obligations and how to support students with disabilities.

The Aim Higher Act will go a long way to address some of these barriers and provide additional ways to support students with disabilities, their families, and educational professionals. For example, the bill ensures teacher preparation programs build a competent workforce of teachers equipped to instruct diverse learners; requires colleges to accept a student's formal documentation of disability from high school when seeking accommodations so students are not required to undergo new costly evaluation to re-prove existence of a disability; and improves data collection so that students and their families will know the types of support services offered when selecting a school. In addition, the bill reauthorizes the Transition to Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities, a program that has allowed thousands of students with intellectual disabilities to acquire additional academic and independent living skills that will enhance their chances of obtaining competitive, integrated employment.

By 2020 65 percent of all U.S. jobs will require some postsecondary education and 90 percent of new jobs in growing industries with high wages will require, at a minimum, some postsecondary education (Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 2013). It is extraordinarily important to ensure that more students have the opportunity to access higher education opportunities to help the be successful in the 21st Century.

The CCD Education Task Force urges every member of Congress to support this bill and to work in a bipartisan fashion to move the bill through Congress.

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