



July 31, 2026

(Washington, DC) –The Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) Education Task Force applauds the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee for unanimously advancing the Respond, Innovate, Succeed, and Empower (RISE) Act. The legislation will help ensure a smoother transition for students with disabilities into postsecondary education by allowing an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan to serve as documentation of disability when requesting accommodations. This commonsense change will reduce unnecessary barriers and help students access the supports they need to succeed in higher education.

We also appreciate the Committee's bipartisan action under the leadership of Senators Kaine, Murkowski, and Collins to advance S. 5046, legislation that would prohibit several proposed Interagency Agreements (IAAs), including the transfer of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) out of the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Protecting OSERS is an important step toward preserving ED's congressionally authorized role in administering the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and ensuring States and districts continue to receive consistent oversight and support to best serve students with disabilities. While we remain disappointed that the legislation does not also prevent the transfer of the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), which typically sees half its cases pertaining to violations of disability rights, we recognize S. 5046 as meaningful bipartisan progress and look forward to continuing to work with Congress to ensure the Department of Education remains whole.

However, we remain deeply concerned by the Committee's advancement of the 21st Century Dyslexia Act. CCD strongly supports improving outcomes for students with dyslexia and ensuring they receive timely identification and appropriate services. We believe this legislation would make significant changes to IDEA in ways that will misidentify students with or without dyslexia, including relying on an outdated definition of dyslexia that incorporates IQ testing, and unnecessarily create a new category under IDEA. We appreciate Senator Cassidy's expressed willingness to engage with the disability community, and we look forward to collaborating with him to identify a solution that strengthens support for students with dyslexia through evidence-based strategies.

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