



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CEC Applauds Passage of Senate Labor-Health-Education Funding Legislation

The following is a statement by Deborah Ziegler, Associate Executive Director, Council for Exceptional Children

Today, under the leadership and vision of Senator Tom Harkin (D-Ia.), the Senate Labor-Health-Education Appropriations Subcommittee made a powerful statement on behalf of the nation's 10 million children with disabilities and/or gifts and talents when it approved legislation that proposes key investments in special and gifted education programs and rejects the fiscally irresponsible notion of sequestration.

This legislation, which outlines funding levels for education programs for the upcoming 2014 fiscal year, will reverse the course of sequestration, which has devastated education programs by cutting over \$2.3 billion and proposes additional funding for programs critical to children with youth with disabilities and/or gifts and talents, such as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – including the early intervention program (Part C), grants to states for school-aged students (Part B), special education research, and the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act, championed by Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) and Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-Ia.).

With more than 6 million children and youth with disabilities served by IDEA and 3 million students with gifts and talents, this bill recognizes that our nation's schools can no longer continue to be shortchanged by the federal government.

CEC applauds Sen. Harkin, a longtime advocate for children with disabilities, for his efforts to increase funding for programs and services that support early intervention and improved educational outcomes. IDEA's programs provide critical resources to support the education of students with disabilities, which is typically thought to cost double that of a student without disabilities. Unfortunately, even with the proposed increase of \$125 million included in this bill, the federal pledge made in 1975 to fully fund IDEA remains unanswered.

As the full Senate Appropriations Committee prepares to consider this bill on Thursday, CEC urges Committee members to maintain the investment and vision for special and gifted education included in today's bill.

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The Council for Exceptional Children is an international community of professionals who are the voice and vision of special and gifted education. CEC's mission is to improve, through

excellence and advocacy, the education and quality of life for children and youth with exceptionalities and to enhance engagement of their families.

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