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March 31, 2020

The Honorable Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos
U.S. Department of Education
Lyndon B. Johnson Building
Room 7W301
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1510

Re: H.R. 748 (CARES Act) IDEA and Section 504 Waiver Recommendations

Dear Secretary DeVos,

On behalf of the signatory organizations representing parents, families, and educators of individuals with learning disabilities, **we urge the U.S. Department of Education to reconsider offering any recommendations to Congress for additional waivers needed for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, pursuant to Section 3511 of the CARES Act. Any additional waivers would significantly roll back civil rights protections for students with disabilities, including individuals with learning disabilities.** Over 7 million children, including more than 2 million with specific learning disabilities, the highest proportion category of disabilities under IDEA, rely on IDEA and Section 504 to receive necessary special education supports, services, instruction and protections. The recommendation of waivers under IDEA or Section 504 could lead to the unraveling of civil rights and educational protections for children and other individuals with learning disabilities.

The COVID-19 outbreak has placed a tremendous and unprecedented strain on states, schools, and districts. I understand the challenges and need for flexibility; however, it is imperative that we find solutions that do not put our children's education at risk by undoing many of their civil and educational rights. We must protect our most vulnerable children, especially now.

Please support children with learning disabilities and their families who rely upon IDEA and Section 504 to have equitable access to a free and appropriate education.

If you have any questions or if we can be a resource to you in any way, please contact LDA's Director of Federal and State Engagement, Aaron Goldstein, at agoldstein@ldaamerica.org or (412) 341-1515.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cindy Cipoletti".

Cindy Cipoletti
Executive Director
Learning Disabilities Association of America

Learning Disabilities Association of Alabama - Tamara Massey Garrett
Learning Disabilities Association of Arizona - Rob Crawford
Learning Disabilities Association of Arkansas - Katie King
Learning Disabilities Association of Florida - Cathy Einhorn

Learning Disabilities Association of Georgia - Gigi Moore
Learning Disabilities Association of Illinois - Beverley H. Johns
Learning Disabilities Association of Indiana
Learning Disabilities Association of Iowa - Paula Hamp
Learning Disabilities Association of Kentucky - Steve Noble
Learning Disabilities Association of Maine - Ann Johnson
Learning Disabilities Association of Maryland - Jamie Brown
Learning Disabilities Association of Minnesota - Martha Moriarty
Learning Disabilities Association of Nebraska - Clarice Jackson
Learning Disabilities Association of New Jersey - Leslie Rubinstein
Learning Disabilities Association of North Carolina - JoAnna J. Barnes
Learning Disabilities Association of Ohio - David Russell Saunders
Learning Disabilities Association of Oklahoma - Holly Rice
Learning Disabilities Association of Pennsylvania - Collin Diedrich
Learning Disabilities Association of Tennessee - Joy S. Marsh
Learning Disabilities Association of Texas - Rachel Krueger
Learning Disabilities Association of Washington - Lee Kueckelhan
BrainWorks (MN) - Jennifer Bennett
Decoding Dyslexia Alaska - Mary C. Kretzschmar
Decoding Dyslexia Georgia
Decoding Dyslexia Illinois
Decoding Dyslexia Iowa
Decoding Dyslexia Louisiana
Decoding Dyslexia Maryland - Winifred A. Winston
Decoding Dyslexia Massachusetts - Nancy Duggan
Decoding Dyslexia New York - Melissa Wilson
Decoding Dyslexia Ohio - Melissa DeVore
Decoding Dyslexia South Carolina - Karen Smith
Decoding Dyslexia Wyoming - Heather Fleming
Decoding Dyslexia Oklahoma
Decoding Dyslexia Pennsylvania - Jessica McKee
Decoding Dyslexia West Virginia - Jody Walters
International Dyslexia Association - Jason Marshall
Law Office of Richard J. Murphy, PLC (AZ)
P.S. Reading Studio (WI) - Paula Stone

cc: Mark Schultz, Commissioner, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Delegated the Duties
of OSERS Assistant Secretary
Kenneth L. Marcus, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
Laurie VanderPloeg, Director of OSERS' Office of Special Education Programs
Nathan Bailey, Chief of Staff, Office of the Secretary
Molly Petersen, Legislative Director, Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs