



August 3, 2018

The Honorable Robert C. Scott
Ranking Member
House Committee on Education and the Workforce
2101 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for the Aim Higher Act (H.R. 6543)

Dear Ranking Member Scott:

The Arc is pleased to support the Aim Higher Act, a comprehensive reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) that would improve higher education access and outcomes for all students, including those with disabilities.

The Arc is the nation's largest national community-based organization for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). The Arc has a network of over 650 chapters across the country promoting and protecting the human rights of people with I/DD and actively supporting their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes.

The Aim Higher Act will go a long way to support students with disabilities, their families, and educational professionals in the following ways:

Strengthens Teacher Recruitment and Preparation

The bill preserves the TEACH grant program, which provides scholarships for teacher candidates to serve in high need fields—including special education—in high need schools. Additionally, it retains and expands the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Grant program. TQP focuses on skill development in using research-based practices that improve outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities. These provisions ensure teacher preparation programs build a competent workforce of teachers for diverse learners.

Reauthorizes Transition to Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSIDs)

TPSIDs have allowed thousands of students with intellectual disabilities to acquire additional academic and independent living skills that enhance their chances of obtaining competitive, integrated employment. In 2016, forty percent of students who exited the TPSID program held paid jobs, and 80 percent of the students who exited the program earned one or more credentials prior to exiting, according to the program's most recent annual report. The Aim Higher Act keeps this important program in place for future students.

Removes Barriers to Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities

The Aim Higher Act improves the HEA to better align with the inclusive goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. It requires colleges to accept a student's formal documentation of disability high school when seeking

accommodation so students are not required to undergo new, costly evaluation to reprove the existence of a disability. It also improves data collection so that students with disabilities and their families can make informed choices when selecting a school and provides grants to implement and expand Universal Design for Learning (UDL) campus-wide.

The Arc urges every member of Congress to support the Aim Higher Act and to work in a bipartisan fashion to move the bill through Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Annie Acosta".

Annie Acosta
Director of Fiscal and Family Support Policy