The Funding Early Intervention is the Right IDEA Act (HR 4107)

SUMMARY

Representatives Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA) and Rodney Davis (R-IL) introduced The Funding Early Intervention is the Right IDEA Act (HR 4107), which proposes to rebuild per child amounts under Part C and Section 619 in order to support infants, toddlers, and preschool children as well as their schools. The measure proposes to significantly increase funding for Part C and section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) over ten years. IDEA is a law which makes free and appropriate education to eligible children with disabilities from birth to 21 years of age. The bill complements the IDEA Full Funding Act (H.R. 1878), which the Autism Society also supports.

Part C of IDEA authorizes grant programs to aid states in providing early interventions services for infants and toddlers (birth-age two) with disabilities and their families. Section 619 of IDEA provides grants to States to create and maintain preschool programs serving children with disabilities between the ages of three and five.

High-quality early intervention and preschool special education services can alter a child with autism’s developmental trajectory and improve outcomes for children, families, and communities. High-quality early childhood education also increases childhood language, reading, and writing ability, which supports school readiness and increases future academic, emotional, social, and behavior successes.

In the last two decades funding for Part C has eroded significantly from a high of $1,768 per child in 1999 to $645 per child in 2017. Over the last 25 years Section 619 has experienced similar financial erosion, a high of $1,484 per child in 1992 to $529 in 2017. The numbers in this report have been adjusted for inflation. Furthermore, with more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities it is critical to restore funding.

The Funding Early Intervention is the Right IDEA Act proposes to increase funding for part C and section 619 of IDEA. This restoration of funding would ensure continued delivery of high-quality early intervention and preschool special education services. The bill authorizes that Section 619 Preschool program would be increased from $537 million in FY2020 to $1.2 billion in 2024. Funding for Part C Early Intervention would go from $722 million in 2020 and grow to $1.7 billion by 2024.

This restoration of funding would allow part C and section 619 to carry out their obligations to providing early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families as well as providing preschool children access to preschool special education services.

For more information see the bipartisan press statement of Reps. DeSaulnier and Davis and the Autism Society’s letter of support for the bill.