



Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Josie Sova. I am writing today in strong support of removing the percentage cap on the amount of funding distributed from the State School Fund to school districts for students eligible for special education services. As an occupational therapy assistant (COTA/L) with experience providing school-based OT services and now working in a community-based pediatric occupational therapy clinic, I have seen firsthand how funding limitations negatively impact students with disabilities.

In my years working in school-based therapy, I supported countless children who required specialized interventions to access their education—children with autism, sensory processing challenges, motor delays, and other disabilities that directly impacted their ability to learn and participate in the school environment. However, due to funding caps, many districts struggled to provide the necessary support services, leaving students without adequate resources to succeed.

Now, in a community-based setting, I frequently work with families who seek private therapy because school-based services are not meeting their child's needs. I hear their frustration when therapy minutes are reduced, when essential accommodations are delayed, or when students are denied services simply because schools don't have enough funding to provide them. This should not be the reality for children who have a legal right to an appropriate education.

Removing the percentage cap on special education funding is essential for:

- Ensuring equitable access to special education services, regardless of how many students in a district require support.
- Providing adequate OT, PT, and speech services to help students develop skills for success in school.
- Supporting teachers and staff who need the right tools and resources to effectively include students with disabilities in general education settings.
- Reducing the burden on families who currently have to seek outside therapy because school services are insufficient.

Children with disabilities deserve the same opportunities to learn, grow, and succeed as their peers. Funding should reflect the actual needs of students—not be arbitrarily capped. I urge you to support this change so that schools can better serve all students who require special education services.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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