

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to support SB 5515 and fully fund programs that provide services for children and adults with disabilities and the families and providers that support them.

Columbia Regional Inclusive Services provides specialized services to students with specific disabilities like autism, who are blind/visually impaired, deaf/hard of hearing, deafblind or who have orthopedic impairments or traumatic brain injuries. The program needs \$122.4 million for the next biennium to provide adequate services to the 15,000 K-12 students in the program.

Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) provides services to babies, toddlers and preschoolers with disabilities. This program provides just one-third of what children in Washington state receive and needs \$432.8 million in the next biennium to provide a basic service level for the 15,000 students in the program.

As a Speech-Language Pathologist who primarily supports students who are non-verbal with multiple disabilities, it is my hope that my testimony encourages your support for fully funding these programs for the next biennium to provide invaluable services to students with disabilities. I have seen first-hand the care and attention families and students are provided by these services and I advocate wholeheartedly for these programs to be fully funded.

Sincerely,

Emily Johnson, M.S., CCC-SLP