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The Honorable John Fetterman  
United States Senate  
B40C Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Fetterman and Staff,

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association (PSHA) and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), we would like to extend our sincere thanks to you and your staff for taking the time to meet with us and for your support of legislation to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Your willingness to engage in meaningful conversations about this critical issue and your commitment to children with disabilities is deeply appreciated.

As discussed in our meeting, IDEA is a cornerstone of educational equity in the United States. Enacted in 1975, IDEA guarantees that students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. It ensures early intervention services, special education, and related services, such as speech and language therapy, for millions of children across the country, including essential speech-language and hearing services.

When IDEA was first passed, the federal government committed to funding up to 40% of the average per-pupil expenditure for each child receiving special education services. Unfortunately, current federal funding for IDEA stands at only around 10%, placing a significant financial burden on states and local school districts to make up the difference. This underfunding undermines the intent of IDEA and jeopardizes the resources available to support students with disabilities.

Your support of legislation that would fully fund IDEA is not only a step toward fulfilling the promise made nearly five decades ago—it is a powerful affirmation of our shared belief that every child deserves access to the resources and opportunities needed to thrive.

Thank you again for your time, attention, and leadership on this issue. We look forward to continuing to work together to support children with disabilities and the professionals who serve them.

Sincerely,

Erin Buckwalter, MBA, MS, CCC-SLP  
PSHA President

Caroline Bergner, JD  
ASHA Director, Health Care Policy, Medicaid

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PSHA President Elect