

# The Advocacy INSTITUTE

October 20, 2011

The Honorable Michael F. Bennet  
The Honorable Jeff Bingaman  
The Honorable Richard Blumenthal  
The Honorable Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
The Honorable Al Franken  
The Honorable Kay R. Hagan  
The Honorable Tom Harkin

The Honorable Mark Kirk  
The Honorable Jeff Merkley  
The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski  
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski  
The Honorable Patty Murray  
The Honorable Bernard Sanders  
The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse

Dear Senator:

The Advocacy Institute, a not-for-profit organization that works to improve the lives of children and adults with disabilities, thanks you for your work to support students with disabilities in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Specifically, we appreciate your opposition to the amendment offered by Senator Isakson during the Committee mark-up.

The Isakson amendment (#2) sought to increase the number of students with disabilities who could be assessed using less challenging systems of standards and assessments for purposes of school accountability. As we know, neither the data -- which indicates that students who need an alternate assessment are far less than one percent of all students -- or best practice would support placing more students into alternate assessments. By voting against this amendment, you have reinforced the position that students receiving special education services must be held to high standards and the same expectations as their non-disabled peers. Most importantly, you have also ensured that students with disabilities have access to challenging curriculum and the opportunity to become college and career ready and fully participate in our society.

Thank you again for this important vote to protect the nation's 5.9 million school-age students with disabilities. We look forward to working with you as the ESEA reauthorization moves forward.

Sincerely,



Candace Cortiella  
Director

*A not-for-profit organization dedicated to services and projects that work to  
improve the lives of children, youth and adults with disabilities.*

P.O. Box 565 ♦ Marshall, Virginia 20116 ♦ Phone 540.364.0051  
www.AdvocacyInstitute.org ♦ Email: info@AdvocacyInstitute.org