



ITCA Update

March 17, 2025

This week's update reports on activities occurring in Washington DC directly related to our mission and purpose. The Congress is now on a district work recess all this week. ITCA will continue to provide federal updates on Monday of each week.

FFY 2025 Funding After the Senate passed the CR on March 14th achieving the 60 votes necessary, the President signed into law this final CR that will fund the government up through September 30, 2025. The Senate passed the bill by a vote of 54 to 46. The House had passed the bill on March 7th.

Generally, the CR funds most federal programs at last year's 2024 levels. However, for some programs, cuts were included and for others increases were included. The bill includes \$73 billion in domestic cuts from the FFY 2024 levels and \$6 billion increases in border funds and other defense items. This bill does not include cuts to Medicaid.

It is still not clear how the individual programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will be funded. The bill includes the total FFY 2024 amount for all of IDEA and Special Olympics. The bill language states; "For carrying out the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act of 2004, \$75,467,264,000..." The administration will determine how these funds will be shared among all the line items contained in the IDEA and Special Olympics. These are the funds that states will receive July 7, 2025.

Budget Resolution and Reconciliation Now that the FFY 2025 funding is finalized, Congressional attention will return to passage of a Budget Resolution agreed to by the House and the Senate. The House passed its version of the budget resolution, including \$7.5 to 2 trillion in cuts and \$4.5 trillion in spending for potential tax cuts. The Senate also passed its version of the budget resolution in a much smaller bill that does not include any tax cuts. Among other possible cuts, significant cuts to Medicaid are being considered.

Negotiations to complete the budget resolution process are expected to continue through April and may extend to the Memorial Day recess. The final budget resolution will give directions to congressional committees to make specific program

cuts to meet the overall target given to each committee. These committees would likely have a deadline in June to draft legislation to make specific cuts and changes to programs. The final cuts and changes could be considered sometime in July before the annual August recess.

Department of Education Last week, the Department of Education Secretary Linda McMahon released a statement titled "U.S. Department of Education Initiates Reduction in Force". According to the order, nearly 50% of the career staff working at the Department of Education have been placed on administrative leave beginning March 21st. These employees will receive full pay and benefits until June 9th, as well as substantial severance pay or retirement benefits based upon their length of service. Staff from the Office of Special Education Programs were not affected by the RIF. However, staff from the Office of Civil Rights, the Office of General Council, the OSERS Policy office and other offices in regional and D.C offices were included. The statement from the Secretary is at: <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-initiates-reduction-force>

Legal Actions In response to the OCR cuts, two parents and a national disability advocacy organization, the Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates (COPAA), have filed suit against the U.S. Department of Education to stop the termination of civil rights investigators and lawyers at the Office for Civil Rights. The complaint states, "Without even minimally adequate staffing, OCR cannot fulfill its mandate and move complaint investigation and processing forward." To view the complaint, go [here](#).

In addition, attorneys general from 22 states have filed a federal lawsuit in Massachusetts against the Education Department, alleging the reduction in force is not legal. The lawsuit alleges that the reduction in force, which would cut the department's staff from more than 4,000 to fewer than 2,200, violates the separation of powers and hinders the department's ability to fulfill its statutory responsibilities.

Head Start Directive Head Start grantees have just received an order from the federal Office of Head Start. The directive indicated that the use of federal funding for any training and technical assistance or other program expenditures that promote or take part in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEi) initiatives will not be approved. All grantees are asked to carefully review their annual funding application to ensure consistency with this notice.