

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Joins colleagues, introduces bill to fully fund high need schools, special education

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) joined her colleagues in introducing the *Keep Our Promise to America's Children and Teachers (PACT) Act*, bicameral legislation to put Congress on a fiscally responsible path to fully fund the assistance program that helps our country's highest need schools, Title I, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) on a mandatory basis.

“Every child in Wisconsin deserves access to quality education. I’ve talked to Wisconsin students, parents, and teachers about the daily challenges they face because of strained budgets and a lack of resources in the classroom. Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are essential tools in ensuring students in lower-income households and those with disabilities succeed,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “I am proud to introduce this legislation to help make sure our students – regardless of their disability status, zip code, or family’s income – have the tools and resources they need to get a high quality education and succeed in and out of the classroom.”

Title I is a critical tool to ensure that every child, no matter their zip code, has access to a quality education. However, it has been deeply underfunded, disadvantaging the most vulnerable students living in poverty. According to the National Education Association, the Title I funding gap for school year 2020-2021 was \$30.6 billion.

Similarly, IDEA calls on the federal government to fund 40 percent of the cost of special education, but Congress has never fully funded the law. According to the National Education Association, IDEA state grants are funded at less than 14

percent.

The *Keep Our PACT Act* would create a 10-year mandatory glide path to fully fund both Title I and IDEA, ensuring that education is a priority in the federal budget.

The legislation was led by U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) and Congresswoman Susie Lee (D-NV), and is supported in the Senate by U.S. Senators Alex Padilla (D-CA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Ben Ray Lujan (D-NM), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Jack Reed (D-RI), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Ed Markey (D-MA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Tina Smith (D-MN), Bernie Sanders, (I-VT), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Cory Booker (D-NJ), and Michael Bennet (D-CO).

This legislation is supported by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), National Education Association (NEA), National Urban League, Council for Exceptional Children, Council of the Great City Schools, Journey for Justice Alliance, National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), National Center for Learning Disabilities, National Disability Rights Network, UnidosUS, National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), and National PTA.

Bill text is available [here](#).

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