



## Government Affairs Update

Presenters: Terri Lakowski and Jason Marmon,  
AHEAD Government Affairs Representatives

# Presentation Overview

- I. What We Do
- II. Policy Agenda
- III. How to Get Involved

# I. What We Do

AHEAD supports government policies that ensure full and effective participation by individuals with disabilities in every aspect of the postsecondary experience. This includes:

- **Rights and protections** – *Government policies that protect the rights of students with disabilities and other minority groups*
- **Diversity, Equity, Respect, and Inclusivity** – *Government policies that promote diversity, equality, respect, and inclusivity in higher education for students with disabilities*

## II. Policy Agenda

- **National Center for College Students with Disabilities (NCCSD)**
- **College financial aid flexibility for college students with disabilities**
- **Respond, Innovate, Succeed, and Empower (RISE) Act**
- **Improved Access to Technology Accommodations**
- **Better Data/Information**

## II. Policy Agenda

### **National Center for College Students with Disabilities (NCCSD)**

- Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC) and Sen. Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) letters
- \$2 million would have been in FY25 federal funding bill
- Met with Congressional appropriations staff
- New spending bucket
- Reached out to the US Department of Education
- FY26

## II. Policy Agenda

### **College financial aid flexibility**

#### House bill

- Rep. Joe Morelle (D-NY)
- Pell Grant only
- 9 cosponsors (6 Democrats/3 Republicans)
- Reintroduced this April by Rep. Morelle and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA)

#### Senate bill

- Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA)
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) grant programs
- 3 cosponsors (Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ), and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT))
- Sen. Van Hollen is working to reintroduce

## II. Policy Agenda

### **Respond, Innovate, Succeed, and Empower (RISE) Act**

- Over half the cosponsors
- Meetings with House and Senate senior staff and sponsors
- Raised our concerns
- Endorsed
- Been reintroduced in the House
- Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR)
- Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH) & Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA)

## II. Policy Agenda

### Other

- Think College technical centers (with AUCD)
- 504/accessible technology
- Reconciliation impacts
- AHEAD member appreciation week webinar



## III. How to Get Involved

- Attend AHEAD Advocacy Webinars
- Post on AHEAD's Connected Community
- Flag policy issues you believe AHEAD should get involved in by emailing [Policy@AHEAD.org](mailto:Policy@AHEAD.org)
- Read The HUB's monthly Policy Corner for the latest AHEAD policy updates and opportunities to engage
- Join our Public Policy Committee

# Questions?