

# COALITION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

March 8, 2021

Education Finance and Policy Committee  
Minnesota Senate  
1100 Minnesota Senate Building  
95 University Ave. W.  
Saint Paul, MN 55155

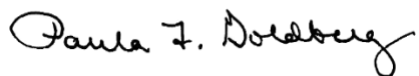
Chair Chamberlain and Members of the Education Finance and Policy Committee:

On behalf of the PACER Center and the Coalition for Children with Disabilities, I am writing to share the Coalition's opposition to Senate File 1525, Chair Chamberlain's legislation to create Education Savings Accounts for students.

While we understand the intent of this bill, the current language prohibits the participation of many students with disabilities. Private schools can and do exclude children with disabilities, and at a minimum are not required to provide the services needed for some children with disabilities to participate in school. This bill aims to promote school choice. Yet, many children with disabilities have no other choice aside from their local public school. Under federal law, children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education ("FAPE"). By requiring student participants in the Education Savings Account to disclaim their entitlement to FAPE from their resident districts, students with disabilities are effectively barred from the program.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our opposition to Senate File 1525. Please contact Sarah Clarke at [sclarke@hyldenlaw.com](mailto:sclarke@hyldenlaw.com) or 952-201-4654 with any questions.

Sincerely,



Paula Goldberg  
Executive Director, PACER Center  
Member of the Coalition for Children with Disabilities

## **Coalition for Children with Disabilities**

The Arc Minnesota • Autism Society of Minnesota  
Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota • Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid/Minnesota Disability Law Center  
Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance • PACER Center  
Prader-Willi Syndrome Association of Minnesota • Proof Alliance