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Comments Received :

Dear Mr. Paoletta,

I am writing as a parent of a child with a disability to strongly oppose the U.S. Department of Education's proposal to remove the Significant Disproportionality data collection from Section V of the Annual State Application under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Families like mine rely on the Department to ensure that States are using fair, consistent, and transparent methods to identify significant disproportionality in identification, placement, and discipline. If the Department stops collecting information about changes to a State's methodology, it will no longer have the tools it needs to monitor whether States are following the law. This change would also make it harder for parents and communities to understand what is happening in our schools and to hold our States accountable. And despite the Department's claims, removing this requirement does not meaningfully reduce burden for States.

As a parent, I am deeply concerned that eliminating this data collection would hide important information about how students with disabilities—especially students of color—are being treated. The Department has a clear responsibility under IDEA to monitor compliance and protect students' civil rights. Choosing not to collect this information is not only harmful, it is an abdication of that responsibility.

I urge you to require the Department to continue collecting Significant Disproportionality data under IDEA section 618(d) and 34 CFR §§ 300.646–300.647 through Section V of the Annual State Application. Families deserve transparency. Students deserve equity. And the Department must uphold its duty to ensure both.

Sincerely,
Courtney Hansen