

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 124

Recognizing the importance of increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders, supporting programs for increased research and improved treatment of autism, and improving training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for individuals with autism.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 26, 2005

Mr. HAGEL (for himself, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Ms. STABENOW) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the importance of increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders, supporting programs for increased research and improved treatment of autism, and improving training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for individuals with autism.

Whereas the Autism Society of America, Cure Autism Now, the National Alliance for Autism Research, The Dan Marino Foundation, and numerous other organizations commemorate April as National Autism Awareness Month;

Whereas autism is a developmental disorder that is typically diagnosed during the first 3 years of life, robbing individ-

uals of their ability to communicate and interact with others;

Whereas autism affects an estimated 1 in every 166 children in America;

Whereas autism is 4 times more likely in boys than in girls, and can affect anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or other factors;

Whereas the cost of specialized treatment in a developmental center for people with autism is approximately \$80,000 per individual per year;

Whereas the cost of special education programs for school-aged children with autism is often more than \$30,000 per individual per year;

Whereas the cost nationally of caring for persons affected by autism is estimated at upwards of \$90,000,000,000 per year; and

Whereas despite the fact that autism is one of the most common developmental disorders, many professionals in the medical and educational fields are still unaware of the best methods to diagnose and treat the disorder: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) supports the establishment of April as Na-
3 tional Autism Awareness Month;

4 (2) recognizes and commends the parents and
5 relatives of children with autism for their sacrifice
6 and dedication in providing for the special needs of
7 children with autism and for absorbing significant fi-

1 nancial costs for specialized education and support
2 services;

3 (3) supports the goal of increasing Federal
4 funding for aggressive research to learn the root
5 causes of autism, identify the best methods of early
6 intervention and treatment, expand programs for in-
7 dividuals with autism across their lifespan, and pro-
8 mote understanding of the special needs of people
9 with autism;

10 (4) commends the Department of Health and
11 Human Services for the swift implementation of the
12 Children’s Health Act of 2000, particularly for es-
13 tablishing 4 “Centers of Excellence” at the Centers
14 for Disease Control and Prevention to study the epi-
15 demiology of autism and related disorders and the
16 proposed “Centers of Excellence” at the National
17 Institutes of Health for autism research;

18 (5) stresses the need to begin early intervention
19 services soon after a child has been diagnosed with
20 autism, noting that early intervention strategies are
21 the primary therapeutic options for young people
22 with autism, and early intervention significantly im-
23 proves outcomes for people with autism and can re-
24 duce the level of funding and services needed later
25 in life;

1 (6) supports the Federal Government’s nearly
2 30-year-old commitment to provide States with 40
3 percent of the costs needed to educate children with
4 disabilities under part B of the Individuals with Dis-
5 abilities Education Act (IDEA);

6 (7) recognizes the shortage of appropriately
7 trained teachers who have the skills and support
8 necessary to teach, assist, and respond to special
9 needs students, including those with autism, in our
10 school systems; and

11 (8) recognizes the importance of worker train-
12 ing programs that are tailored to the needs of devel-
13 opmentally disabled persons, including those with
14 autism, and notes that people with autism can be,
15 and are, productive members of the workforce if they
16 are given appropriate support, training, and early
17 intervention services.

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