

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 481

Designating April 2008 as “National Autism Awareness Month” and supporting efforts to increase funding for research into the causes and treatment of autism and to improve training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for individuals with autism.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 13, 2008

Mr. HAGEL (for himself, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. FEINGOLD, and Ms. STABENOW) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Designating April 2008 as “National Autism Awareness Month” and supporting efforts to increase funding for research into the causes and treatment of autism and to improve training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for individuals with autism.

Whereas autism is a developmental disorder that is typically diagnosed during the first 3 years of life, robbing individuals of their ability to communicate and interact with others;

Whereas autism affects an estimated 1 in every 150 children in the United States;

Whereas autism is 4 times more likely to occur in boys than in girls;

Whereas autism can affect anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, or other factors;

Whereas it costs approximately \$80,000 per year to treat an individual with autism in a medical center specializing in developmental disabilities;

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;

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; and

Whereas designating April 2008 as “National Autism Awareness Month” will increase public awareness of the need to support individuals with autism and the family members and medical professionals who care for individuals with autism: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) designates April 2008 as “National Autism
3 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-
8 nancial costs for specialized education and support
9 services;

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

8 (4) stresses the need to begin early intervention
9 services soon after a child has been diagnosed with
10 autism, noting that early intervention strategies are
11 the primary therapeutic options for young people
12 with autism, and that early intervention significantly
13 improves the outcome for people with autism and
14 can reduce the level of funding and services needed
15 to treat people with autism later in life;

16 (5) supports the Federal Government's more
17 than 30-year-old commitment to provide States with
18 40 percent of the costs needed to educate children
19 with disabilities under part B of the Individuals with
20 Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.);

21 (6) recognizes the shortage of appropriately
22 trained teachers who have the skills and support
23 necessary to teach, assist, and respond to special
24 needs students, including those with autism, in our
25 school systems; and

1 (7) recognizes the importance of worker train-
2 ing programs that are tailored to the needs of devel-
3 opmentally disabled persons, including those with
4 autism, and notes that people with autism can be,
5 and are, productive members of the workforce if they
6 are given appropriate support, training, and early
7 intervention services.

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