

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 349

Expressing support for designation of April 2009 as “National Autism Awareness Month” and supporting efforts to devote new resources to 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 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 21, 2009

Mr. REICHERT (for himself, Mr. GERLACH, and Mr. BACHUS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for designation of April 2009 as “National Autism Awareness Month” and supporting efforts to devote new resources to 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 four 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-age 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 April 2009 would be an appropriate month to designate as “National Autism Awareness Month” to 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 United States House of Rep-
2 resentatives—

3 (1) expresses support for designation of a “Na-
4 tional Autism Awareness Month”;

1 (2) recognizes and commends the parents and
2 relatives of children with autism for their sacrifice
3 and dedication in providing for the special needs of
4 children with autism and for absorbing significant fi-
5 nancial costs for specialized education and support
6 services;

7 (3) supports the goal of devoting new resources
8 to researching the root causes of autism, identifying
9 the best methods of early intervention and treat-
10 ment, expanding programs for individuals with au-
11 tism across their lifespans, and promoting under-
12 standing of the special needs of people with autism;

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

21 (5) 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 (6) 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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