

gasoline as high as they are, putting away money is difficult for many Americans. It is not made any easier by a government that takes about 40 percent away in taxes.

This week, the House is going to vote on a bill to make retirement easier for working Americans. We are going to increase IRA contribution limits from \$2,000 a year to \$5,000. We are going to increase the limit on 401(k) contributions to \$15,000. And we are going to allow people close to retirement an additional \$5,000 in catch-up contributions to their 401(k)'s.

Helping people keep more of their own money so they can invest it and retire comfortably is a cause every Member of this body should support. We have not increased IRA limits in 20 years. This legislation is long overdue.

Yes, Republicans passed this legislation before; but this time we have a President who will sign the bill. This time it will become law. I thank the President for joining us in doing the right thing.

ABOLISH THE IRS

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, a government investigation said that the IRS gave, quote-unquote, wrong information 50 percent of the time. In addition, they say one-third of all calls to the IRS go unanswered.

Unbelievable. According to my math, the IRS is upside down about 80 percent of the time. If that is not enough to give your 1040 a hernia, the IRS says, give us more money and we will solve our problems. Beam me up. The IRS does not need more money. Congress has got to abolish the IRS.

A recent national poll says 70 percent of American taxpayers favor the Tauzin-Traficant 15 percent national sales tax. No more forms, no more tax on capital gains, savings, investment, education, inheritance. Think about it. And the IRS is abolished.

I yield back those stumbling, fumbling, bumbling, nincompoops at the IRS.

SCHOOL CHOICE WORKS

(Mr. HEFLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, children should not be trapped in a failing school where they cannot possibly reach their fullest educational potential. That is why H.R. 1 includes a school choice program that enables parents to send their children to another school, public or private, after 3 years of chronic failure.

Public support for school choice is strong, especially among African Americans. A survey conducted in 1999 by the Joint Center for Political and

Economic Studies found that approximately 60 percent of African Americans favored school choice. According to a bipartisan poll for the National Education Association conducted in February, 63 percent of Americans say they support President Bush's approach to school choice.

Moreover, school choice programs in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Florida have met with significant success. Howard University's Jay P. Greene found that since Florida's A-Plus school choice program began, student test scores have improved across the board. There is evidence that the A-Plus program has compelled failing schools in Florida, now under the threat of losing their students, to improve performance.

It is our responsibility to empower parents to make the right decision for their children's future.

VIEQUES, PUERTO RICO

(Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ. Mr. Speaker, I am here to reaffirm the commitment of the Government of Puerto Rico to find a solution to the situation in Vieques. While we work toward that end, I must bring to your attention recent unfortunate events. The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ) was more than one of 150 protestors who committed the misdemeanor offense of trespassing on Federal lands. Some 72 hours after being arrested, our colleague was still detained. This after being denied a phone call for more than 24 hours and having spent a night on a rock strewn floor of an abandoned roofless dog kennel in the rain. I am outraged by the treatment of the detainees by Federal authorities and the use of excessive force against peaceful protestors.

I must address those who have used the issue of Vieques to call into question Puerto Rican commitment to the defense of this great Nation and the principles it represents. For over 100 years, Puerto Ricans have served with distinction and paid the ultimate sacrifice for the United States during wartime. I quote Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, who said last week, "The patriotism of Puerto Ricans is absolutely certain. Their contribution to our military individually is extraordinary." With the same spirit that Puerto Rican soldiers have defended democracy and justice around the world, today we defend the rise of the more than 9,000 U.S. citizens that live in Vieques.

Vieques is not a partisan issue. It is no longer a Puerto Rican issue. Vieques is an issue of health, environment, and human rights. *Paz para Vieques.*

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE PHIL ENGLISH, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The Speaker pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable PHIL ENGLISH, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, April 27, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House, Capitol Building.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Effective April 27, 2001, I hereby resign from the Committee on Small Business. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please ask your staff to call my Administrative Assistant, Bob Holste at 5-5406.

Sincerely,

PHIL ENGLISH,
Member of Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable RICHARD A. GEPHARDT, Democratic Leader:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
Washington, DC, April 30, 2001.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 1404 of Public Law 99-661 (20 U.S.C. 4703), I hereby appoint the following individual to the Board of Trustees of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation: Mr. Ralph M. Hall, Texas.

Yours Very Truly,
RICHARD A. GEPHARDT.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BRITISH-AMERICAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the British-American Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. PETRI of Wisconsin; and
Mr. GALLEGLY of California.
There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record votes on postponed questions will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 6 p.m. today.

RECOGNIZING IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING AUTISM AWARENESS

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to

the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 91) recognizing the importance of increasing awareness of the autism spectrum disorder, and supporting programs for greater research and improved treatment of autism and improved training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for them.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 91

Whereas the Autism Society of America, Cure Autism Now, the National Alliance for Autism Research, Unlocking Autism, and numerous other organizations commemorate April 27 as Autism Awareness Day and April as Autism Awareness Month;

Whereas autism is a developmental disorder that is typically diagnosed during the first three years of life;

Whereas autism has robbed at least 400,000 Americans of their ability to communicate and interact with others;

Whereas autism affects at least 1 in every 500 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 autistic persons 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 more than \$13 billion 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

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) supports the goals and ideas of Autism Awareness Day and Month;

(2) recognizes and commends the parents and relatives of autistic children for their sacrifice and dedication in providing for the special needs of their autistic children and absorbing significant financial costs for specialized education and support services;

(3) supports the goal of increasing Federal funding for aggressive research to learn the root causes of autism, identify the best methods of early intervention and treatment, and promote understanding of the special needs of autistic persons;

(4) urges the Department of Health and Human Services to continue to press for the swift and full implementation of the Children's Health Act of 2000, particularly the establishment of not less than three "Centers of Excellence" at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and not less than five "Centers of Excellence" at the National Institutes of Health, in order to monitor the prevalence of autism at a national level, leading to a better understanding of autism and related disorders;

(5) stresses the need to begin early intervention services soon after a child has been diagnosed with autism, noting that early intervention strategies, including Applied Behavioral Analysis, are the primary therapeutic options for young autistic persons;

(6) supports the goal of federally funding 40 percent of the costs of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to States and local school districts, recognizing that the inadequacy of this funding has adversely affected the ability of school districts to ap-

propriately respond to the rising number of autism cases in our schools;

(7) urges Federal, State, and local governments to allocate sufficient resources to teacher training initiatives to alleviate the shortage of appropriately trained teachers that have the skills and support necessary to teach, assist, and respond to the special needs of autistic students in our school systems; and

(8) recognizes the importance of worker training programs that are tailored to the needs of developmentally disabled persons, including those with autism, and notes that autistic persons can be, and are, productive members of the workforce if they are given appropriate support, training, and early intervention services.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD).

□ 1415

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 91, and include extraneous materials.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD).

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support this legislation for two very important reasons: One is a grandchild of Lurla and Richard Mane of Augusta, Georgia, who is an autistic child. The Manes are dear friends, and I have watched as they and their family have struggled with autism over the years.

Mr. Speaker, it is my humble opinion that there are far too many American families suffering the effects of autism on a family member, with far too little being done to search out the cause of autism, or for effective treatments. It seems that no one really cares about autism until their child or a friend's child has autism.

This disease affects nearly half a million Americans, yet there are no FDA-approved treatments. There are no clear diagnostic tests to even accurately determine when the disease exists. Properly directed Federal research aid holds the promise of correcting these deficiencies. We have failed to provide that direction in the past. Let us not fail again in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, the second reason I support this bill is that it recognizes and calls for action on one of the most glaring injustices of this body; namely, our failure to live up to our word for disabled children.

When we passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, known around here as IDEA, we ordered our local schools to provide disabled stu-

dents, including those students suffering from autism, whatever they needed. In return, this body agreed to pay 40 percent of the cost of this Federal mandate, and it may come as little surprise to many of us, the Federal Government has not paid its share of the tab, but we have been sure to fully enforce our local school's obligation to pay theirs.

This bill recognizes that fact and moves this Congress closer to honoring its word. It is time we provided every dollar of support for our autistic students in public schools to which we are obligated.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as the cochairman of the Congressional Coalition for Autism Research and Education, it is my honor to speak in support of House Concurrent Resolution 91 which recognizes and commends parents and families of autistic children for their sacrifices and loving dedication to the demanding needs of caring for an autistic loved one.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize and thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), my colleague on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for allowing me to manage the time; and I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), cochairman of the Coalition for Autism Research and Education, for introducing this resolution and for his support of autism awareness legislation such as last year's ASSURE Act, which had the support of nearly 200 Members of Congress and is now public law.

Autism is a family of closely related disorders commonly known as autism-spectrum disorders. No matter what particular disorder, autism is a devastating, lifelong impairment of childhood development that significantly impacts the lives of those affected, as well as the lives of parents and relatives. Autism deprives children of their ability to interact with others in ordinary ways. It robs them of the means to understand and communicate, and destroys normal reasoning skills. Autism forever changes the lives of individuals affected, and resonates deeply throughout the social, economic and spiritual lives of all family members.

Mr. Speaker, this disorder affects nearly 1.7 million Americans, with recent evidence pointing to a prevalence rate that one out of every 150 to 170 children born has an autism-spectrum disorder. Autism does not discriminate. It affects all races and economic status with equal veracity. The disorder is more common than Down's syndrome, muscular dystrophy, cystic fibrosis and many forms of childhood cancer.

The symptoms usually become apparent by the first 2 years of life, with nearly 75 percent of cases occurring in the second year as normal reasoning skills fail to develop. The other 25 percent of cases usually occur in the 12-to-24-month time period in which they regress and typical autism behavior

emerges. It is the latter “regressive autism” cases that have been linked to the measles, mumps and rubella vaccination.

Most disturbing is the fact that we simply don’t know what causes autism and autism-spectrum disorders, nor do we know any cure for the disorder. But the number of those afflicted continues to grow. For those of us who have not experienced autism directly in our families, it may be difficult to truly comprehend just how demanding and stressful raising a child with autism can be on a family.

Just last Friday, during the first coalition information briefing, I heard a description of autism that, as a father of four children, really hit home for me. Mr. Speaker, imagine that tonight while here in Washington, someone secretly entered my colleague’s home and replaced my colleague’s son or daughter with another child that looked exactly like their son or daughter, but did not speak or acknowledge when his or her name was called; who found parental affections painful and repulsive. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, if that child changed overnight and remained that way forever. This is autism, my friends.

I have had a long-standing working relationship with autism advocacy leaders both here in Washington and in Pittsburgh. The impact of autism on families and individuals was first brought to my attention by Mr. Dan Torisky. Dan and I met in my early days in politics when I worked for a State senator, and from the first day I met Dan, I was impressed with his tireless and tenacious attitude towards finding a cure for autism. Dan was a past two-term national president of the Autism Society of America, and remains one of the most amazing advocates for autism that I have ever met.

Dan knows autism on a very personal level. Dan’s son, Eddie, is autistic; and like all families across America struggling with autism, from day one, Dan and his late wife, Connie, simply wanted their son to have as normal a life as possible. The Toriskys gave me my first comprehensive educational lesson on what it meant for a family to live with autism. I realized that the voices of local researchers, advocacy leaders, and parents needed to be heard by Congress so that they, too, could be educated about the needs for more advanced and dedicated research.

Most importantly, I understand how frustrated parents of autistic individuals are when it comes to their legacy. Who will care for their autistic child when they are no longer here?

Mr. Speaker, the cost associated with caring for and providing critical services to individuals with autism can be phenomenal. In my home State of Pennsylvania, the Autism Society of America estimates that we have 73,686 individuals with autism-spectrum disorders, which translates into about 0.6 percent of the total population. If you take into account early intervention,

special education, transportation to special programs, respite care, housing and special programs for adults with autism, over the course of a year, it is estimated that autism costs Pennsylvania \$50,000 per person.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, Congress must confront the rising problem of autism on three fronts: cause, cure, and quality of life.

We must continue Federal funding of advanced research into the suspected causes of the disorder, including efforts aimed at investigating the connection between late-onset autism and measles vaccinations, and identifying the genetic and biologic basis of susceptibility to autism.

We must continue to fund research into the cures for the disorder that for the time being have helped us better identify and treat autism. Ongoing research has shown that the effects of autism can be mitigated if proper steps are taken to identify the disorder at the earliest age possible, and corresponding intervention programs are applied.

We must also improve the quality of life for individuals with autism, while not turning our back on quality research into the causes and treatment. Autism lasts a lifetime, and often children with the disorder outlive parents. This creates a burden on the health care and social service systems nationwide, one that they are ill-prepared to carry. We need to care for and educate autistic children and adults, and provide properly trained staff and educators to meet the highly complex and specialized needs of these individuals. It is important that we take appropriate steps to reduce the disability associated with autism so that more individuals can work and live semi-independently.

Mr. Speaker, it makes good sense to invest in research now, and passage of House Concurrent Resolution 91 is an important step because it presses for full implementation of the Children’s Health Act of 2000, now Public Law 106-310. Particularly important is the establishment of up to three additional Centers of Excellence in Autism at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and up to five more Centers of Excellence to complement the ongoing biomedical research of the existing 10 NIH Collaborative Programs in Excellence in Autism.

It is vital that we in Congress fund research programs without taking away much-needed funding to pay for new programs. I believe that any expansion of research programs must come with a corresponding expansion of funding dollars.

Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility to help families dealing with autism. We must do our share because autism is not terminal, and 1.7 million families are a growing and strong testament that life not only goes on, but it can flourish, given strong support and an advocacy network.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the co-founder of the Autism Coalition and a leader in helping to solve the problems of children with this malady.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and thank him on behalf of his good work for autistic children.

Mr. Speaker, I also thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE), the cochairman of the Coalition for Autism Research and Education (C.A.R.E.). It is a privilege to work with him, and I thank the gentleman for his work and the work his staff has been doing.

Mr. Speaker, we have 119 members on the Coalition for Autism Research and Education, CARE, and I hope my colleagues who might be watching in their offices and their staffs would look into joining this coalition. We are trying to mobilize Congress in a bipartisan way on behalf of autistic children and adults and their families, who are in great need of our support.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER) and the majority leader for releasing this resolution to the floor. It was referred to their respective committees, the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Education and the Workforce. The majority leader and the committee chairman worked together to get the resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) for his work on behalf of this, and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), who held a very important hearing on the issue of autism, trying to get to the core reasons as to what is causing it.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS), who was the prime sponsor of the Children’s Health Act which contained title I which sets up the Centers of Excellence. Many of us worked on that language, and we were very pleased when the gentleman made that title I of his very important health care initiative.

□ 1430

Mr. Speaker, H. Con. Res. 91 calls attention to one of the major public health issues of our time, the developmental disorder called autism. Last Friday (April 27), as Members probably know, parents and families of autistic children from all over the country came down to Washington to mark the second annual Autism Awareness Day and to raise awareness of the challenges and sacrifices families make on behalf of their loved ones. H. Con. Res. 91 calls attention to autism and tries to dedicate this Congress, this body, this House, to supporting efforts to treat and to eventually cure autism. In the meantime, we need to at least mitigate its occurrence.

Mr. Speaker, it is not an exaggeration to say that autism spectrum disorders may be the silent epidemic of our time. It is silent because this developmental disorder has robbed at least 400,000 children of their ability to communicate and interact with their families and their loved ones. It is silent because there are currently no operational autism registries in the Nation to tell us how many people are actually afflicted with this disorder. Conventional wisdom and passive reporting suggests that autism affects at least one in every 500 children in America. Much of the recent anecdotal evidence, however, suggests that autism rates are significantly higher, some say closer to one in every 250 children. We have got to get to the bottom of the numbers but more importantly the why of it. Why is this exploding on our scene in America today? What is the cause? What is the pathway? Is it environmental? Is it an immunization shot? Nobody really knows. There are a lot of theories, but not much when it comes to getting to the bottom of the why of it.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say to my colleagues, I was brought into this 21 years ago by a Dr. Holmes who runs the Eaton Institute in Princeton, a very, very important, dedicated person who has done so much, has literally written books and books on the issue of autism. But more recently it was a family, Bobbi and Billy Gallagher in Brick Town, New Jersey who came to me and said, "We think we have an elevated number of autistic cases in Brick Township, New Jersey." They brought evidence. They had done their own survey, finding that there may be as many as 4 per 1,000 rather than the estimates of 2 per 1,000 in that municipality. We then invited the CDC and ATSDR in and they did an empirical, very scientific study.

The bottom line is that they brought forth information that suggested an elevated incidence of prevalence that exceeded what was supposedly the norm. CDC and ATSDR found, about 4 per 1,000 children had autism, and in the spectrum, 6.7 per 1,000 children this was much higher than what we anticipated. This study may indicate that there is a cluster of children with autism in Brick Township, but this study may portend a much higher incidence occurring throughout the country.

We need to spend more money on this. This resolution at least puts us on record as saying it is important to us, we want to get to the bottom of it, and we want to see implementation of title I of the Children's Health Act.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Utah (Mr. MATHESON).

Mr. MATHESON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak today as a member of the Congressional Autism Caucus and to voice my support of House Concurrent Resolution 91. The challenges of autism have been brought to my attention by parents and families whose

lives have been affected by autism. Often these parents suffer as the young children do not speak, do not make eye contact and withdraw from them socially. This legislation provides a call for increased awareness of autism. It commends the courage of parents, recommends early intervention, and encourages training and support for parents, teachers, and professionals who work with autistic children. While once children with autism may have been institutionalized, now early interventions can unlock the worlds of these children.

In my home State of Utah, one of the greatest challenges in expanding services to children with autism is a lack of adequate resources. Many children are denied services due to a lack of space. These are the services which have helped other children learn to interact with family and to combat the debilitating effects of autism. Currently in Utah, there is a call to establish an Autism Center for Excellence, a new school with the space, the trained personnel, the teachers, the social workers, and the researchers all engaged in helping these children and families escape their isolation and integrate into society.

The Carmen B. Pingree School will be the first systemic program in the Nation to help children with autism develop from preschool through the elementary grades. It will provide these early services, and it will engage in progressive research. It is my hope that this legislation will provide some of the needed impetus for the recognition of autism. Hopefully it will be the beginning of many efforts across the Nation to create centers of excellence like the Carmen B. Pingree School to bring crucial services into the lives of children with autism.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), the chairman of the Committee on Government Reform.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). The gentleman from Indiana is recognized for 4 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) for yielding me this time. I would like to congratulate the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) for cochairing the Autism Caucus.

I did not know much about autism, except it was a disease of some kind that afflicted a lot of kids and some adults until it happened to my grandson. One day he was normal, starting to talk, walking, great kid. He got nine shots in one day. Nine shots in one day. Many of the shots he received had mercury in them. Most people do not know that when their kids are vaccinated, many of the shots they get have thimerosal in them. It is mercury and

mercury is a toxic substance that hurts people, especially children, and it builds up in your system as you get more and more of it.

Anyhow, within just a couple of days after getting nine shots in one day, the MMR shot which has been referred to by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) and many shots including mercury, he started flapping his arms, running around banging his head against the wall, he had obstructions in his bowel, he had chronic diarrhea, he walked around on his toes, and he has not been normal since.

The interesting thing about this is that I found out after seeing this in my grandson, that not too long ago one in 10,000 children in this country were autistic. One in 10,000. Now it is between 1 in 250 and 1 in 500. The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) just said we have an epidemic on our hands. We really do have an epidemic. In the life span of a child who is autistic, the cost is going to hit this economy to the tune of about \$5 million each. Each. And if 1 in every 250 to 500 children are autistic, we better darn well pretty soon find out the cause. Our health agencies really are not doing much. They are appropriating very, very little money in research into autism.

We have a growing body of scientists and doctors who have testified before my committee and the Congress that are saying that mercury is a contributing factor to autism and Alzheimer's. We have a growing number of people who have Alzheimer's in this country. They are getting shots with mercury in them. I got a vaccination here by the doctor at the Capitol and I found out, he did not know it, he is a great doctor, a fine fellow, but he did not know there was mercury in the vaccine. How many of my colleagues got vaccines this year to protect themselves against the flu, flu vaccine? If you got one, you got mercury in your vaccination. That is a contributing factor according to a lot of scientists and doctors to Alzheimer's and to autism in kids. We need to find out why they are putting mercury in vaccines. It does not have to be in there. We have a supply of vaccines that will take care of our children across this country that does not contain mercury. Yet if you have three shots in one vial, they put mercury in as a preservative. The mercury is very toxic and may be, and we believe it is, a contributing factor to autism.

All I can say is that the FDA and HHS and all of our health agencies need to get on the stick and get things like mercury and aluminum and formaldehyde out of the shots we are giving our children and out of the shots we are giving adults. I just want to tell Members that every parent, every grandparent in this country ought to be concerned about what is going into their children's bodies. Not too long ago the FDA took any topical dressing you put on your skin, they took mercury out of them because it would leach into the skin and could cause a

problem. Yet they still give shots to our children that contain mercury today. As we speak, children are getting mercury injected into their bodies with vaccines.

That is wrong. It should not happen. It should not happen. That is why we in the Congress ought to know everything we can about what is going into our children. Our children get 26 shots by the time they go to school. Many contain these toxic substances. It should not happen. I personally believe that is what caused my grandson's autism, and I believe parents across the country feel the same way. I do not know how many hundreds of parents I have talked to, thousands of parents I have talked to who had the same experience that we had in our family; and it is something that should not happen.

I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for what they are doing. I want to thank the 113 members that have joined the caucus, and I hope all 435 Members join the caucus and put every bit of pressure we can as well as resources into the health agencies to solve this problem.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from my home State of Pennsylvania (Ms. HART).

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) for yielding time. I also rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 91. I think there are some bright spots in dealing with the issue of autism. Some of them are due to the fact that this Autism Caucus was created 7 years ago.

There has been a great increase in public education and information on the disorder. Parents have become much more active and involved in helping us to get the word out. The caucus has been designed to show that autism is a major children's health issue. People are beginning to understand how important it is.

Based on the dedicated work of the caucus, there have been 10 research programs funded throughout the country in addition to five comprehensive autism centers providing clinical and educational outreach as well as extensive research. One of the best programs is the University of Pittsburgh-Carnegie Mellon Collaborative Program of Excellence in Autism, or CPEA. It works in conjunction with the University of Pittsburgh Center for Autism Research. These researchers are going to be part of the key to solving the problems of autism.

But aside from the research, it is awareness and community awareness. I want to give special recognition to Renee Georgi, a constituent in my old Senate district who has a son with autism. They discovered very early that her son had autism and because of some of the research and some of the developments in educating young people with autism, her son will be able to

be mainstreamed into his elementary school next year. But that is not the complete solution. We do need to find out the causes of autism. We do need to find a cure. It is with dedicated Members of Congress like those here today that we will be able to work together with researchers and parents to make sure that we find that cure and eliminate autism.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA).

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time. I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) for introducing this resolution. I want to thank him and I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE) for cochairing the Congressional Autism Caucus. I am proud to be a member, also.

Also, I want to point out that the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) who chairs the Committee on Government Reform on which I serve has really been exploring through committee hearings the dramatic rise in autism rates and what we can do about it. What was once considered a rare disease affecting one in 10,000 children now, as we have heard now, is estimated to affect one in 500 children, some say one in 250, in the United States.

Over 500,000 people in the United States today have some form of autism. The estimated prevalence rate of autism now places it as the third most common developmental disability, more commonly occurring than Down's syndrome. Unfortunately we found through these hearings that there is almost no existing data on causes or links to causes of autism in children.

We found that there is a real need to fully understand the actual incidence of autism and autism spectrum disorders. For example, we need to better understand what if any is the link between vaccines and acquired or late onset autism. I have no doubt of the need for more autism research that will lead to better treatment options and cures and the need for more practice-based research to evaluate current treatment options.

Autism or autism spectrum disorder is not only simply a learning disability or developmental delay, it is a medical condition, a neurobiological disorder. The Autism Society of America defines autism as a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first 3 years of life. Children and adults with autism typically have difficulties in verbal and nonverbal communication, social interactions and leisure or play activities. The disorder makes it hard for them to communicate with others and relate to the outside world.

Mr. Speaker, I want to know why autism is four times more prevalent in boys than girls, when in fact autism knows no racial, ethnic or social boundaries, and it appears that family

income, life-style and educational levels do not affect the occurrence of autism.

□ 1445

Mr. Speaker, in this country we look forward to the future. We plan for the future. We look at our children as the future. With the children's future in mind, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and make sure that that ribbon which has the puzzle pieces in it has those puzzle pieces come together with research.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. GREENWOOD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous material.)

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, the other speakers, my colleagues, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DOYLE), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the cofounders of the coalition, have outlined the agonies that parents go through when they find that their children suffer from autism. It is just that those precious moments in the upbringing of a child, as the child begins to communicate, there is a glimmer of recognition of the child, of his siblings, of the world around him or her, and the joy of beginning to sing with their children and to teach them their ABCs and to read to them and to laugh with them. It is just at that time in the development of a child that this terrifying phenomenon occurs, and that is closing down where suddenly the child begins to just turn away and fall away from the grasps of the parents, not beyond their love but certainly beyond their ability to communicate. It is a heartbreaking event.

The parents in my district and in my colleagues' districts around the country, many of them decided to turn their anguish into action. They decided that the thing to do was to see if this process that we are engaged in here in Washington actually works. They came to Washington and they said, we need legislation to try to cure this disease, to find out what causes it, to find out how to treat it, to find out how to diagnosis it, to teach doctors how to recognize this disease. They came and we introduced legislation in the last session and the session before that. It took a lot of perseverance on the part of these parents and these families coming to Washington over and over again, through all of our press conferences, coming to their Members from around the country to persuade them to join forces with us; but they succeeded.

For a while it was a little bit frightening because the autism bill became a children's health act as one disease after another was added to the legislation. There was some fear that maybe this thing was growing so big that it would be too expensive and too hard to pass; but as it turned out, it created momentum to parents of children with all kinds of conditions who helped to

pass this legislation; and we passed it and it was a wonderful, magnificent example of how our political process can actually work in this country.

The problem was, or the problem became, that now we had to go to the next stage, and that is the implementation. This bill calls for the creation of five Centers of Excellence geographically distributed throughout the country where parents can take their children, when they suspect there might be a problem of this kind, for diagnosis; where they can get them involved in the latest clinical trials; where there are the best researchers, the best doctors, the best experts in the country all located to get to the bottom of this disease, and to provide real hope for the parents that their children can progress and hopefully some day be cured of this.

It turned out it was going to take years, literally years, to get these Centers of Excellence up and running, and that is not what Congress intended, and that was unacceptable.

Just last week during the rally, some parents and I, upset about all of this, called into my office from the Department of Health and Human Services the National Institutes of Health Acting Director Ruth Kirschstein, and we said that it was unacceptable that these Centers of Excellence would be postponed a couple of years. I am pleased to report today that we made magnificent progress in that meeting, and I take my hat off to Dr. Kirschstein for the commitment that she made that day. The commitment that she made is that just 6 weeks from now, by mid-June, June 15 to be precise, the National Institutes of Health will put out the request for applications for the Centers of Excellence. By the end of the year, all of those applications will be in and by next year we will be prepared to the tune of \$12 million, which is their commitment to fund these Centers of Excellence.

So finally this process that these parents have been so engaged in and so many of my colleagues have been so committed to will actually come to fruition, and around the country hopefully we will be able to stand with these parents and their children and cut the ribbons to these centers and have the children walk in and meet their new doctors and their new therapists so that in future years we will be able to report to our colleagues in the House and to the rest of the country that this has worked; that not only did we get a bill passed, but we got it implemented and we got the money spent and we got the experts working side by side with the parents on behalf of these children and, in fact, we can hopefully see the day where these children will begin to come out of these mental prisons in which they have been held captive so cruelly for so many years.

Will that day not be a day for great celebration?

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE, NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH,

Bethesda, MD, May 1, 2001.

Hon. JAMES GREENWOOD,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. GREENWOOD: Thank you for the opportunity to discuss implementation of the autism title of the Children's Health Act of 2000 with you, members of your staff, and representatives of Cure Autism Now in your office last Friday. I commend you for your legislative leadership and your personal commitment to focusing federal resources on research that will lead to a better understanding of this terrible illness and eventually better treatment for those who bear its burden. I also want you to know that all of us at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) share your commitment.

I particularly appreciated your patience and objectivity in listening to NIH's plans for meeting the goals of the Act. As my colleagues and I explained, investigators performing autism research represent a relatively small field of science. We believe the field needs to be broadly developed and also invigorated by new researchers with expertise that may expedite and enhance scientific discoveries. At the same time, NIH wants to facilitate the work of outstanding researchers currently in the field by providing additional resources to them, including the establishment of the Centers of Excellence described in the Act.

Toward carrying out the Act's provisions, NIH is in the process of implementing a multi-stage approach to autism research. An important part of our approach is the solicitation, through a recent Request for Applications (RFA), for investigators interested in receiving NIH support to develop research excellence in autism. Separately, NIH will also accept applications from current investigators who believe they have sufficient expertise to coordinate and manage Centers of Excellence, as authorized by the Act. NIH will clarify in a public notice issued within the next ten days that applications will be accepted for this latter endeavor; we intend to issue a separate RFA for Centers of Excellence by June 15, 2001. Of course, applications for both development grants and Centers of Excellence grants must undergo and pass NIH's peer review process.

In addition, I assure you that NIH will strive to fully fund the Centers of Excellence within the parameters of the Act.

I will keep you informed as we proceed. My colleagues and I will answer any additional questions you might have in the future regarding implementation of the Act, as well as any other queries regarding the state of autism research in general. Again, thank you for inviting us to discuss this matter. Please let me know if I can be of additional assistance.

Sincerely,

RUTH L. KIRSCHSTEIN, M.D.,
Acting Director.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I just want to thank my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD), who has really been one of the leaders in this Congress for the cause of autism, and my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH). I think we all feel the same way. We do not want to take five steps forward and go 10 steps backward. We

want to make sure that we fund and continue to fund the 10 existing centers as we put the five new ones online.

This comes down to a matter of funding. We are blessed this year to be looking at surpluses in this budget. Surely, we want to make sure we are not robbing from Peter to pay Paul and that as we put these new centers online that we find the funding to do that, without taking any funding away from the research that needs to take place at the existing centers.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we have a strong showing of votes in favor of this resolution for the 1.7 million individuals living with this disorder, of which 400,000 are children.

In closing, I urge passage of House Concurrent Resolution 91, encourage my colleagues who have not yet joined the Coalition for Autism Research and Education Caucus to please do so.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 91. Over the past few years there has been increasing interest in autism. How prevalent is it? What causes it? How do you treat it? Can we prevent it? During Congressional hearings, we have heard heart-wrenching stories from parents about the shock of hearing the diagnosis of autism, about the battles to find appropriate schooling, and about the desperate search for treatments and cures. One father told us that he has to drive 12 hours every month to take his son to treatment. The testimony of these parents have provided us with crucial information necessary for a better understanding of the impacts of this disease and what our research priorities should be.

We have also heard the testimony of some clinicians who are reporting increasing diagnoses of autistic children in their clinics. CDC researchers have told us that they do not have good data on the number of cases of autism, whether the number is going up and, if it is, by how much. It is important to determine how pervasive this disease is and whether the rates are, in fact, increasing. Many researchers have suggested that environmental factors may contribute to autism. Understanding if there is an increase in incidence and when that increase began may give us some clues to what environmental factors could be to blame.

Researchers have also testified at our hearings that much about the causes of autism remains unknown and that treatment options are limited. And we know that there is no known cure for this disease.

We have heard some positive things as well. Recently, several genes associated with autism have been identified. Last week, researchers from NIH, the March of Dimes, and the MIND Institute at the University of California, Davis, announced that they may have found a biological marker for autism that would allow for the identification of autism earlier in life, before the onset of symptoms. This could lead to better diagnoses of autism, earlier interventions, which are critical for a more successful outcome, and perhaps the discovery of therapies for the disorders.

Despite these recent advances, answers are not coming quickly enough for the parents of autistic children who live with these conditions every day, many of whom have tried every available treatment and intervention and who

are running out of options. It is our obligation to these parents and to their children that we do everything we can to ensure that the best possible research is conducted quickly and thoroughly by appropriating the money authorized under the Children's Health Act and through other authorities of the NIH. In the meantime, while we wait for answers, we need to help parents of these children get the free and appropriate education to which their children are entitled by fully funding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Many questions about autism remain unanswered. What we do know, however, is that we are not yet doing enough to help these children. I hope that the current attention being given to this devastating disease reflects a renewed commitment on the part of Congress and can bring new hope to families living with autism.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 91, a resolution recognizing the importance of increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders, and supporting programs for greater research and improved treatment of autism and improved training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for them. I commend my colleague from New Jersey, Mr. SMITH, for introducing this resolution.

We owe a debt of gratitude to national organizations such as the Autism Society of America, Cure Autism Now, Unlocking Autism, and others that have done a tremendous job with limited resources in their efforts to help parents and relatives of individuals with autism disorders. These groups have long been involved in research as well as in the development of improved treatments for autism. Their local affiliates, like the Southwest Chapter of the Autism Society in El Paso, are a beacon of hope for many families that have few places to turn to for help. I personally want to thank the Southwest Chapter in my district for providing help and networking for local families that are often overwhelmed by dealing with autism disorders.

It is time for Congress to step up to the plate and provide more tools for these families, and to provide the necessary resources for education and increased research. H. Con. Res. 91 is about helping families. For those of you who have a member of the family with autism, and for those of you assisting these families, this resolution is a signal that we in Congress understand the need to tackle autism disorders head on and work together to find better ways to treat autism, to expand federal research, to improve access to a community-based education and support services, and ultimately, to find a cure.

Mr. Speaker, I once again want to thank Congressman SMITH for introducing this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to vote in support of this important effort.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 91, which recognizes the importance of increasing awareness of the autism spectrum disorder, and in support of programs for greater research and improved treatment and training.

Autism is a development disorder that is typically diagnosed within the first three years of life. It does not discriminate based on family income, lifestyle or educational level. Its cause is essentially unknown. Its prevalence rate makes autism one of the most common developmental disabilities.

As a result of autism, an estimated 400,000 Americans have lost the ability to communicate and interact with others, although many states do not track the numbers. The cost of caring for people afflicted with autism is estimated to be more than \$13 billion per year.

I firmly support the goals and ideas of Autism Awareness Day and Month. A generation ago, most people with autism were housed in institutions. With the appropriate support most families are able to take care of their autistic child at home. Others move into group homes, assisted living or residential facilities.

I recognize and commend the parents of autistic children for the sacrifices and dedication they show in providing for the special needs of their autistic children and absorbing the significant financial costs for specialized education and support services. Special education costs for a child with ASD are over \$8,000 per year, with some specially structured programs costing about \$30,000 per year, and care in a residential school costs \$80,000–100,000 per year.

I support increased federal funding for research to learn the causes of autism, identify the best methods of early intervention and treatment, and promote understanding of the special needs of autistic persons. I also support the goal of federally funding 40 percent of the costs of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to states and local school districts, because the funding inadequacy has adversely affected the ability of school districts to serve the rising number of autism cases. Nationally, in 1989–99, the last year for which data is available, IDEA served only about 35,000 students, 4300 in Texas. This is only a portion of those who need such services.

I urge swift implementation of the Children's Health Act of 2000, particularly the establishment of at least three "centers of excellence" at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and at least five centers at the National Institutes of Health, in order to monitor the prevalence of autism at the national level. Furthermore, although there is no medical cure for autism, it is crucial that we provide early intervention services soon after a child has been diagnosed with autism. Such services result in dramatically positive outcomes for young children with autism, helping many to eventually live and work independently in the community and become productive citizens.

Mr. Speaker, together we can make a difference.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 91, which recognizes the importance of increasing our nation's awareness of the autism spectrum disorder, and supporting programs for greater research and improved treatment of autism and improved training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for them.

Autism impacts our society in a myriad of ways. By supporting funding for research and increasing education and awareness, we can begin to effectively fight this devastating disease. It is important to understand how autism is defined, why the autism rate is increasing at an alarming rate, and how we can support effective research that will benefit those who are affected by autism.

Autism is a disease that affects an individual's ability to communicate and interact with people and their environment. While autism

may not have been a common disease during my childhood, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that autism rates have increased from affecting 1 in 10,000 children to its current rate of 1 in 500 children. If autism is not affected by race, ethnicity, socio-economic, and educational factors, then what does affect the increasing rate of autism? Only continued research can begin to fully answer this question.

Autism is a disease that paralyzes communication, and we cannot afford to paralyze our own communication between the medical community, the government sector, and those affected by autism. Accordingly, the Committee on Government Reform has recently held a number of hearings that have determined that there is a lack of support for biomedical research into the causes, prevention, and effective treatments of autism. This research is essential to our ability to help those who are affected by this disease. These hearings have also discovered that there may be a significant link between certain childhood vaccines and autism. It is still much too early to draw any concrete conclusions about this relationship, but I am confident that by working with the FDA, NIH and the CDC, we can begin to learn more about autism.

It is gratifying that our colleagues, the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. SMITH and the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. DOYLE are co-chairing the Congressional Caucus on Autism. This caucus will have to build support for essential autism research. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be here in support of H. Con. Res. 91, following the 2nd Annual Autism Awareness Day. This resolution calls attention to one of the major public health issues of our time—the developmental disorder called autism.

Autism has affected the lives of an estimated 400,000 children—one in five hundred—and altered their ability to interact and communicate with family and loved ones. Despite the tremendous impact on families, we still lack adequate information on this condition. In fact, we have no scientific records to indicate exactly how many children have autism, or the degree to which they are affected. Information on the cause and treatment of autism is also severely limited. Despite the fact that autism is one of the most common developmental disorders, many professionals in the medical and education fields are still unaware of the disorder.

Awareness is the key to this important issue. Specialists do know that early intervention services can dramatically improve a child's long-term prospects, if autism is detected at an early age. In many cases, early intervention can determine if a child is able to speak. While the cost of educating a child with autism is expensive, no price tag can be placed on a child's future.

H. Con. Res. 91 is a step in the right direction because it supports greater research and improved treatment of autism. In addition, this legislation appropriately asks for improved training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for them.

As a member of the Autism Caucus, I applaud Chairman CHRIS SMITH's leadership on this important issue. My fellow New Jersey colleague has displayed hard work and dedication as the Chair of the Autism Caucus and

he is the reason that this legislation is before us today. I urge you to join our efforts in support of legislation that will significantly improve the lives of thousands of children.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 91. Autism, a brain disorder that affects 1 to 2 in every 1,000 Americans, too often results in a lifetime of impaired thinking, feeling, and social functioning. This disability has no racial, ethnic, or social boundary and usually appears in the first three years of a child's life.

In Fairview Heights, Illinois, the Illinois Center for Autism was established in 1977 to provide a Special Day School program. At the time, it was serving eight children with autism. Today, the Illinois Center for Autism has helped prevent the institutionalization of hundreds of people with autism and has assisted them to become productive members of society. I commend the center for its continuing commitment to autism and dedication to service.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to support the goals and ideas of Autism Awareness Day and Month and support the goal of increasing federal funding for aggressive research on autism. I recognize the parents and relatives of autistic children and hope this legislation gives them optimism for their children. The Illinois Center for Autism in my district is one example of true achievement, and I commend the center for its continuing commitment to autism and dedication to service. For these reasons, I support this legislation.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as an original cosponsor, I would like to express my strong support for H. Con. Res. 91, and I commend my colleague and author of this legislation, CHRISTOPHER SMITH, for addressing the importance in promoting an increased awareness of autism spectrum disease disorders.

Autism is a brain disorder that impacts an individual's ability to respond appropriately to an environment and to form relationships. It affects at least 1 in every 500 children in America, and some studies suggest even 1 in 200. The number of children who are diagnosed with autism has escalated dramatically and, in Florida, approximately 50 percent of children suffering from autism reside in my community of South Florida.

My good friends, Charles and Patience Flick, have two children, Bonnie and Willis, who have autism. This development disorder has robbed Bonnie and Willis of their ability to communicate and interact with their family members and playmates. Fortunately, Bonnie and Willis are able to afford the little treatment and intervention that exists, but many families living with this disorder are not as fortunate.

As a Member of the House Autism Caucus, and as a strong supporter of H. Con. Res. 91, I am committed to raise awareness on autism, to work toward an increase of \$6 million for the National Institutes of Health, and an additional increase of \$5 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

I support the goals and ideas of Autism Awareness Day and Month, which are: to begin early intervention services for children with autism, federally fund 40 percent of the costs of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to States and local school districts, and recognize the importance of worker training programs that are tailored to the needs of developmentally disabled persons, including those with autism.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the House leadership for helping to raise awareness on autism by bringing H. Con. Res. 91 to the floor, and I strongly encourage my colleagues to pass this resolution and join the efforts in finding a cure.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 91, which recognizes the importance of increasing awareness, support, and research for the autism spectrum disorder. I would like to thank my colleagues, Congressman SMITH of New Jersey and Congressman DOYLE of Pennsylvania for their leadership in introducing this important legislation.

In my district of Guam, 28 children with autism are enrolled in Guam's public school system and 20 families are members of the Autism Society of Guam. Today I would like to take this opportunity to share one mother's challenge of raising a child with autism.

At two years of age, Jay, who is the fourth child of the Flores family in Guam, was able to speak in full sentences with clear articulation. One day he stopped talking. He began to have severe regression, which was noticed at age three. He was not able to make any bowel movements without suppositories. He messed up his bed and played with his feces. He gradually lost the many skills he learned in school. He displayed many difficult behaviors, and was unmanageable in school and at home, alternating between violent and withdrawn behavior. His sleep pattern was erratic and he averaged only about three to four hours of sleep each night. He also required a lot of prompting to do self-help skills.

As Jay became older, he also became worse. He began running into the street and getting inside neighbors' homes. He also was very self-abusive, banging his head and hitting himself so his arms and legs were bleeding. He cried constantly. Around the clock, family life revolved around Jay. His mother sought solutions to his problems. Unfortunately, our system in Guam did not understand Jay's situation. As his mother worked with Jay's teachers to provide the most appropriate program for him, his education seemed to become just a series of fragmented services. At that time, Guam's teachers did not have the training nor were they knowledgeable about autism. Jay's mother was able to locate a school that specialized in teaching children with autism. She was able to work assertively with Guam's special education school officials to send Jay to school in Boston as no schools in Guam were able to provide specialized education for children with autism.

At the Boston school, Jay was able to receive the appropriate service needed to teach children with autism. His overall behavior is now in sharp contrast to the behavior shown before he was given a chance to receive this education. His aggressive behavior has reduced. His artistic talent was nurtured and he is able to play some musical instruments and has mastered some academic skills.

Jay's mother, a teacher by profession, became a strong advocate of the effectiveness of this Higashi program, which was developed by Dr. Kiyo Kitahara of Japan. She learned as much as she could from methods from his teachers and wrote a proposal to Guam's Department of Education about developing a program for autistic students. Guam's education officials realized what a contribution her proposal would bring to improve the special edu-

cation services and gave her approval to move forward her proposal.

She was granted a sabbatical from her teaching position, which she spent studying at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She received her masters in special education focusing on autism in just over a year's time and returned to Guam in 1991, to work with the superintendent of special education establishing a program for school children with autism. In 1995, she was recognized as Guam's Teacher of the Year for her efforts. But, shortly thereafter, the Guam superintendent of special education retired and so did the program.

Since then, she has worked with other parents of children with autism to fight for the program she initiated in 1991. Guam's parents and education professionals continue to advocate for appropriate programs for adults and children with autism. Their efforts have resulted in the introduction of Bill 60 in the Guam Legislature to appropriate funding for autistic adults. In addition, one school in Guam recently began offering a preschool program for children with autism. However, the original autism program has not been fully integrated in the school system and many are still not receiving appropriate services.

Jay's mother and other mothers and fathers of children with autism, established the Autism Society of Guam, which was chartered in 1989. The Society's mission is to promote life-long access and opportunity for all individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families through education, advocacy, the promotion of research and increased awareness, the establishment of residential facility, supported employment, and early intervention programs, so that individuals with autism may become fully participating members of their communities.

Due to the efforts of parents and professionals over the years, autism is locally recognized as one of the most challenging disabilities encountered by educators. As you may know, Guam's school system is struggling to meet the basic needs of all students with limited resources. But awareness of autism is growing and Guam's schools are realizing the need for support services for children with autism, including: one-to-one aide assistance, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, counseling, transportation, home component services and leisure education. And though many educators on Guam are increasing in the experience of educating children with autism, few receive proper training to gain a comprehensive understand of the problems associated with autism or are properly trained to provide effective therapy to children with autism.

Autism is a developmental disorder that is not fully understood. Although the cost of treatment and special education of individuals with autism is high, the results of individuals living without appropriate treatment and education are even higher. Approximately, 400,000 Americans have been robbed of their ability to communicate and interact with others. As autism continues to affect at least 1 in 500 children in our country, it continues to deserve our greatest support.

Mr. Speaker, it is for this reason I stand in strong support today and urge my fellow colleagues to join in the efforts to increase awareness, support and research of the autism spectrum disorder. I would also like to

take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of Jay's mother, Jelly Flores, President of the Autism Society of Guam and the officers and Board of Directors of the Society: Rosalina Wirkunnen, First Vice President; Lou Bascon, Second Vice President; Flor Paule, Secretary; Maritess Maulit, Treasurer; assistants Remedios Camilsola and Lirio Mondina; and board members, Beverly Bacera, Dolly Montano, Panchito Maulit, Carol Somerflec, Rupert White, Leonardo Paule, Dr. Nerissa Bretania-Shafer, Gericka Tate and Jesus Bacera, for their heroism and heartfelt commitment to fighting for the rights of individuals with autism. I also would like to acknowledge the efforts of Julian and Beka Martinez in their unceasing work to bring attention to this condition here in Washington, D.C.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 91, Recognizing the importance of increasing awareness of the autism spectrum disorder, and supporting programs for greater research and improved treatment of autism.

Autism is a developmental disability that generally appears between 15 and 20 months. Autism affects boys five times more than it affects girls, although girls are generally more severely affected. In the United States, over one half million individuals live with autism, making it more prevalent than Down Syndrome, childhood diabetes, and childhood cancer combined.

Last year the Children's Health Act was signed into law. This important bill authorized among other worthy goals:

Additional NIH "Centers of Excellence" to study autism and the "Centers of Excellence in Autism Epidemiology."

Provides for training and education grants to professionals who provide care for patients with autism.

Provides grants to states that want to establish their own autism programs.

This year we must fund the programs to their full amount.

Another area that is greatly impacted by autism is special education. For many years Congress has been struggling to increase funding for IDEA. I am happy to say that in the last six years we have done better but there is much more to do. We are still well short of the federal funding of level of 40 percent. The federal government must fulfill its commitment so every special child has access to a quality education.

April was Autism month. Families with autistic children visited many congressional offices last week. Anyone who met with these loving families know the courageous struggles that they endure everyday. We must do everything we can to help these brave children and their families. H. Con. Res. 91 reaffirms Congress' commitment to finding a cure for autism and I urge its passage.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that the House is considering H. Con. Res. 91 today. Among its provisions, this resolution expresses our strong support for the goal of increasing federal funding for autism research and treatment programs. It also emphasizes the need to begin early intervention services for children with autism.

I want to commend my colleagues, Congressmen CHRIS SMITH and JIM GREENWOOD, for their dedicated efforts to improve awareness and understanding of autism while working to expand research and treatment initia-

tives. I was pleased to work with both of them to enact children's health legislation I sponsored in the last Congress, which included provisions they authored to significantly increase federal resources in the fight against autism.

Autism is a brain disorder that most commonly begins in early childhood and persists throughout adulthood. Autism impacts the normal development of the brain in the areas of social interaction and communication skills. Children and adults with autism typically have difficulties in verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions, and leisure or play activities. The disorder makes it hard for them to communicate with others and to relate to the outside world.

Mr. Speaker, autism is a national crisis affecting over 400,000 families and costing the nation over 13 billion dollars each year. According to recent studies, as many as 1 in every 500 children affected by this disorder.

Any parent can tell you that nothing is more heart-wrenching than watching your own child suffer with an illness. As a father and grandfather myself, I know how terrible that can be. Today, however, we have a rare opportunity to do something that will give hope to families affected by autism.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting passage of H. Con. Res. 91.

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GREENWOOD) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 91.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CRATERS OF THE MOON NATIONAL MONUMENT

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 601) to ensure the continued access of hunters to those Federal lands included within the boundaries of the Craters of the Moon National Monument in the State of Idaho pursuant to Presidential Proclamation 7373 of November 9, 2000, and to continue the applicability of the Taylor Grazing Act to the disposition of grazing fees arising from the use of such lands, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 601

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL LANDS RECENTLY ADDED TO CRATERS OF THE MOON NATIONAL MONUMENT, IDAHO.

(a) **REDESIGNATION.**—The approximately 410,000 acres of land added to the Craters of the Moon National Monument by Presidential Proclamation 7373 of November 9, 2000, and identified on the map accompanying the Proclamation for administration by the National Park Service, shall, on and after the date of enactment of this Act, be known as the "Craters of the Moon National Preserve".

(b) ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided by paragraph (2), the Craters of the Moon National Preserve shall be administered in accordance with—

(A) Presidential Proclamation 7373 of November 9, 2000;

(B) the Act of June 8, 1906, (commonly referred to as the "Antiquities Act"; 34 Stat. 225; 16 U.S.C. 431); and

(C) the laws generally applicable to units of the National Park System, including the Act entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes", approved August 25, 1916 (16 U.S.C. 1 et seq.).

(2) **HUNTING.**—The Secretary of the Interior shall permit hunting on lands within the Craters of the Moon National Preserve in accordance with the applicable laws of the United States and the State of Idaho. The Secretary, in consultation with the State of Idaho, may designate zones where, and establish periods when, no hunting may be permitted for reasons of public safety, protection of the area's resources, administration, or public use and enjoyment. Except in emergencies, any regulations prescribing such restrictions relating to hunting shall be put into effect only after consultation with the State of Idaho.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) and the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks, and included extraneous material, on H.R. 601, the bill presently being considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON), to explain H.R. 601, which he introduced.

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, on November 9, 2000, former President Bill Clinton issued Presidential Proclamation 7373 to expand the boundaries of the Craters of the Moon National Monument. Prior to Clinton's proclamation, the monument, which was established by President Coolidge in 1924, comprised 54,440 acres.

Former President Clinton's proclamation expanded the boundaries to include approximately 661,287 acres of additional Federal land. The area is managed by the Secretary of Interior through the National Park Service and