110TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION

S. RES. 78

Designating April 2007 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

February 13, 2007

Mr. Hagel (for himself, Mr. Feingold, Ms. Stabenow, Mr. Carper, and Mr. Schumer) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

March 1, 2007
Reported by Mr. Leahy, without amendment
March 23, 2007
Considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Designating April 2007 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 schoolaged 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 2007 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 2007 as "National Autism
 - 3 Awareness Month";
 - 4 (2) recognizes and commends the parents and
 - 5 relatives of children with autism for their sacrifice

- and dedication in providing for the special needs of children with autism and for 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, expand programs for individuals with autism across their lifespans, and promote understanding of the special needs of people with autism;
 - (4) stresses the need to begin early intervention services soon after a child has been diagnosed with autism, noting that early intervention strategies are the primary therapeutic options for young people with autism, and that early intervention significantly improves the outcome for people with autism and can reduce the level of funding and services needed to treat people with autism later in life;
 - (5) supports the Federal Government's more than 30-year-old commitment to provide States with 40 percent of the costs needed to educate children with disabilities under part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1411 et seq.);

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

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

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