

I am writing to urge the passing of the bill referenced above. I am the mother of a boy who will be turning 13 years old in April and who was diagnosed with high functioning autism in February 2006, when he was in kindergarten. While we are fortunate that our son is high functioning, and is able to attend in mainstream classes for the majority of his public school day, my husband and I are deeply concerned about his future: whether he will be able to succeed in our town's public high school and what his post-high school life will be like. Our son's numerous social skills and attention deficits make it difficult for us to picture him in a traditional college environment when he leaves high school, and we do not know whether he can be an independent wage-earning member of society when he is an adult. These are concerns for most parents but especially for parents of individuals with autism. We