

Dear Committee Members,

Evidence of the significant positive impact that comes from helping persons with Autism early in life, has been clearly established for decades. Children who receive early help with Autism can grow into functional members of society. Please support parent/teacher training and special education programs, so that these children can achieve their highest level of function. It is also important to provide direction and legislative leadership for the inclusion of Spectrum children and youths in mainstream K-12 schools, specifically, using an acceptance and inclusion model with essential anti-bullying training.

It is predicted that changes to the diagnostic categories and practices in the recently released DSM-5, will greatly expand the number of persons who can be diagnosed on the Spectrum. Please help the medical, educational and social services communities of providers, meet the growing need for expanded services.

Our entire society will benefit when you vote to expand early screening and services to children who are identified to function on the Spectrum. Early intervention is their greatest hope and lays the groundwork for success throughout their lives. By providing the expanded training and support needed for our Spectrum children, we are helping our society function at its highest level as well.

Thank you,

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