

By: Simmons

H.R. No. 1782

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Autism is the general term for a group of complex
2 neurodevelopmental disorders that are estimated to impact 1 to 1.5
3 million American adults and as many as 1 out of every 50 children;
4 those living with autism in Texas number approximately 260,000; and

5 WHEREAS, Symptoms of autism typically emerge during the first
6 three years of life and include varying degrees of difficulty in
7 social interaction and communication and the presence of certain
8 repetitive behaviors; persons affected by autism may also
9 experience intellectual disabilities, motor coordination
10 impairment, and physical health issues, such as sleep and
11 gastrointestinal disturbances; and

12 WHEREAS, While there is no known cure for autism, early
13 diagnosis and intervention can drastically alleviate symptoms and
14 can reduce the cost of lifelong care by as much as two-thirds;
15 research has further underlined the significance of family
16 involvement, making connecting families with autism education and
17 resources a priority of particular urgency; and

18 WHEREAS, The United States is home to a number of advocacy
19 groups dedicated to ensuring that all persons living with autism
20 receive appropriate and effective treatment and to allaying the
21 challenges and expenses faced by their loved ones; and

22 WHEREAS, One such group is the Autism Society of America, one
23 of the oldest and largest grassroots organizations of its kind in
24 the nation; composed of 107 local and statewide affiliates, the

1 Autism Society provides more than one million people a year with
2 information, referrals, and support services to help affected
3 individuals reach their full potential and attain an optimal
4 quality of life; and

5 WHEREAS, This admirable group offers a wealth of important
6 resources, including a national contact center that each month
7 responds to over 24,000 people in need of answers or assistance; the
8 society also hosts one of the longest-running and most
9 comprehensive national conferences on autism, a gathering that
10 brings together the expertise and experience of professionals,
11 family members, and individuals along the autism spectrum to build
12 more effective advocacy and support strategies; and

13 WHEREAS, Another organization worthy of note is Autism
14 Speaks, founded in 2005 by Bob and Suzanne Wright, grandparents of a
15 child with autism, and their longtime friend Bernie Marcus, whose
16 \$25 million donation was instrumental to the group's launch; Autism
17 Speaks has since grown into a leading worldwide research sponsor,
18 having committed over \$160 million toward investigations into the
19 causes, prevention, and treatment of autism; and

20 WHEREAS, In addition to its range of research endeavors, the
21 organization's focus includes the Autism Speaks Autism Treatment
22 Network, the Autism Speaks Autism Genetic Resource Exchange, and
23 various other scientific and clinical programs, as well as
24 awareness initiatives like the Light it Up Blue project; moreover,
25 members of its Government Relations Team have successfully
26 campaigned in behalf of federal legislation concerning persons with
27 autism, in particular insurance reform to cover behavioral

1 treatments; and

2 WHEREAS, On April 30, 2013, representatives of the Autism
3 Society of America and Autism Speaks are joining with other
4 concerned individuals from across the state in Austin to observe
5 Texas Autism Awareness Day; designed to increase public
6 understanding of the rights and abilities of autistic persons and
7 to draw attention to advocacy efforts, this event is among many ways
8 that Texans and their national allies are working to foster an
9 environment of compassion, encouragement, and acceptance for all
10 those touched by autism; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 83rd Texas
12 Legislature hereby recognize April 30, 2013, as Autism Awareness
13 Day at the State Capitol and commend the Autism Society of America
14 and Autism Speaks for their many meaningful contributions; and, be
15 it further

16 RESOLVED, That official copies of this resolution be prepared
17 for the Autism Society of America and Autism Speaks as an expression
18 of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives.