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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

DECLARING THE MONTH OF APRIL OF EACH YEAR AS AUTISM AWARENESS  
MONTH IN HAWAII.

1           WHEREAS, this body finds that autism is part of a complex  
2 group of neurodevelopmental disorders, collectively called  
3 autism spectrum disorders; and  
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5           WHEREAS, autism involves delays in and problems with social  
6 interactions, language, and a range of emotional, cognitive,  
7 motor, and sensory abilities that vary according to where the  
8 individual falls on the spectrum ranging from mild impairments  
9 to severe disabilities; and  
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11           WHEREAS, the diagnosis of autism in an individual  
12 transcends all social, religious, socio-economic, and geographic  
13 boundaries; and  
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15           WHEREAS, based on statistics reported by the United States  
16 Department of Education and other governmental agencies, autism  
17 is growing at a startling rate of ten to seventeen percent per  
18 year; and  
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20           WHEREAS, the United States Centers for Disease Control and  
21 Prevention estimate that autism affects as many as one in every  
22 eighty-eight children, and studies show that over the last  
23 twelve years, the prevalence of autism has dramatically  
24 increased by 289.5 percent; and  
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26           WHEREAS, at the rate autism is growing, the Autism Society  
27 of America estimates that the prevalence of autism could reach  
28 four million Americans in the next decade; and  
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30           WHEREAS, the Hawaii Department of Education's Special  
31 Education Section offers educational services to students with  
32 autism and works with families and students to develop an  
33 individualized education plan; and



1  
2 WHEREAS, in 1994, the Department of Education had seventy-  
3 one children, ages six to twenty-one years, with autism who were  
4 eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act,  
5 and that number increased to 1,064 by 2010; and  
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7 WHEREAS, in 2010, the Department of Education served an  
8 additional two hundred thirty-four eligible, school-aged  
9 children with autism, ages three to five, through the  
10 Department's preschool special education programs; and  
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12 WHEREAS, the Department of Health provided intensive  
13 behavioral support services to one hundred sixty-five children  
14 with autism spectrum disorders, up to age three, through its  
15 Early Intervention Section; and  
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17 WHEREAS, while there is no cure for autism, early  
18 identification of developmental concerns allows parents to seek  
19 intervention during the crucial period of early development; and  
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21 WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Hawaii  
22 Chapter, Inc., released a position paper stating that there  
23 should be specific screening for autism spectrum disorders at  
24 eighteen, twenty-four, and thirty-six months of age and  
25 recommends that the screening be done through the use of the  
26 Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers; and  
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28 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's  
29 National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities  
30 launched a public awareness campaign called "Learn the Signs.  
31 Act Early.", which aims to educate parents about childhood  
32 development, including early warning signs of autism and other  
33 developmental disabilities, and encourages developmental  
34 screening and intervention; and  
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36 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Maternal and Child Health Leadership  
37 Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities program  
38 and autism groups in Hawaii are supporting and undertaking the  
39 "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign; and  
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41 WHEREAS, providing widespread information is necessary to  
42 educate parents, professionals, and the general public about  
43 autism, its effects, and the critical importance of early  
44 developmental screening and intervention; now, therefore,



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2 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
3 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
4 of 2012, the Senate concurring, that this body proclaim the  
5 month of April of each year as "Autism Awareness Month" in  
6 Hawaii; and  
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the month of April of every  
9 year serve as a special opportunity to educate the people of  
10 Hawaii about autism, to increase awareness of the importance of  
11 screening through the "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign,  
12 and to encourage families with children, ages eighteen to  
13 twenty-four months, throughout the State of Hawaii to have  
14 screenings at well child visits with their pediatric health care  
15 provider; and  
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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
18 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Director  
19 of Health, Superintendent of Education, State Council on  
20 Developmental Disabilities, Autism Society of America, Inc., The  
21 Autism Society of Hawaii, Autism Speaks Inc., Talk About Curing  
22 Autism, Learning Disabilities Association of Hawaii, Autism/PDD  
23 Family Support Group, Autism Support for Kauai, Kauai Autism/PDD  
24 Family Support Group, Hawaii Families As Allies, Autism  
25 Awareness Puna - A Family Support Group, Military Parents Autism  
26 Support Group for all branches of service, Exceptional Family  
27 Member Program, Community Children's Councils, and Hawaii  
28 Maternal and Child Health Leadership Education in  
29 Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Program.

