

MAR 14 2012

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## SENATE 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  
4

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  
10

11           WHEREAS, the diagnosis of autism in an individual  
12 transcends all social, religious, socio-economic, and geographic  
13 boundaries; and  
14

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  
19

20           WHEREAS, the United States Centers for Disease Control and  
21 Prevention estimate that autism affects as many as one in every  
22 one hundred and ten children, and studies show that over the  
23 last twelve years, the prevalence of autism has dramatically  
24 increased by 289.5 percent; and  
25

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  
29

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  
34

35           WHEREAS, in 1994, the Department of Education had seventy-  
36 one children, ages six to twenty-one years, with autism who were



1 eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act,  
2 and that number increased to 1,064 by 2010; and  
3

4 WHEREAS, in 2010, the Department of Education served an  
5 additional two hundred thirty-four eligible, school-aged  
6 children with autism, ages three to five, through the  
7 Department's preschool special education programs; and  
8

9 WHEREAS, the Department of Health provided intensive  
10 behavioral support services to one hundred sixty-five children  
11 with autism spectrum disorders, ages zero to three years,  
12 through its Early Intervention Services Section; and  
13

14 WHEREAS, while there is no cure for autism, early  
15 identification of developmental concerns allows parents to seek  
16 intervention during the crucial period of early development; and  
17

18 WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics - Hawaii  
19 Chapter released a position paper stating that there should be  
20 specific screening for autism spectrum disorders at eighteen,  
21 twenty-four, and thirty-six months of age and recommends that  
22 the screening be done through the use of the Modified Checklist  
23 for Autism in Toddlers; and  
24

25 WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's  
26 Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities launched  
27 a public awareness campaign called "Learn the Signs. Act  
28 Early.", which aims to educate parents about childhood  
29 development, including early warning signs of autism and other  
30 developmental disabilities, and encourages developmental  
31 screening and intervention; and  
32

33 WHEREAS, the Hawaii Maternal Child Health Leadership  
34 Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities program  
35 and autism groups in Hawaii are supporting and undertaking the  
36 "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign; and  
37

38 WHEREAS, providing widespread information is necessary to  
39 educate parents, professionals, and the general public about  
40 autism, its effects, and the critical importance of early  
41 developmental screening and intervention; now, therefore,  
42

43 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-sixth  
44 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2012,



1 that this body proclaim the month of April of each year as  
2 "Autism Awareness Month" in Hawaii; and  
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4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the month of April of every  
5 year serve as a special opportunity to educate the people of  
6 Hawaii about autism, to increase awareness of the importance of  
7 screening through the "Learn the Signs. Act Early" campaign,  
8 and to encourage families with children, ages eighteen to  
9 twenty-four months, throughout the State of Hawaii to have  
10 screenings at well child visits with their pediatric health care  
11 provider; and  
12

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
14 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, the Director of  
15 Health, the Superintendent of Education, the State Council on  
16 Developmental Disabilities, Autism Society, Autism Speaks, Talk  
17 About Curing Autism, Hawaii Parent Training and Information  
18 Center, Autism/PDD Family Support Group, Autism Support for  
19 Kauai, Kauai Autism/PDD Family Support Group, Hawaii Families As  
20 Allies, Autism Awareness Puna - A Family Support Group, Military  
21 Parents Autism Support Group for all branches of service, the  
22 Exceptional Family Member Program, Community Children's  
23 Councils, and the Hawaii Maternal Child Health Leadership  
24 Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities  
25 Program.  
26  
27  
28

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