

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 23

BY SENATORS FOIL, ABRAHAM, BARROW, BERNARD, BOUDREAUX, BOUIE, CARTER, CATHEY, CLOUD, CORTEZ, FESI, FIELDS, HARRIS, HENRY, HEWITT, JACKSON, JOHNS, LUNEAU, MCMATH, MILLIGAN, FRED MILLS, ROBERT MILLS, MORRIS, PEACOCK, POPE, PRICE, REESE, SMITH, TARVER, WARD, WHITE AND WOMACK

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To declare April 2nd as World Autism Awareness Day in Louisiana, annually.

WHEREAS, World Autism Awareness Day is an internationally recognized day proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly to be April 2nd each year, beginning in 2008, having been adopted in December 2007; and

WHEREAS, this is a tribute to the millions of Americans living with autism spectrum disorder, or ASD, in recognition of the numerous triumphs over many and varied obstacles which are a testament to the strength and resolve of those diagnosed with the disorder, their supportive families, their millions of caretakers, and those who offer unwavering support and encouragement; and

WHEREAS, those millions of Americans diagnosed with a condition that places them on the autism spectrum, a neurological and developmental disorder that affects communication and behavior, have benefitted from ongoing research, both neurological and behavioral which have developed healthy interactive behaviors, helping those affected to understand both verbal and nonverbal communication; and

WHEREAS, autism is an urgent public health crisis that demands support from all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in fifty-nine school-aged children identify on the autism spectrum, therefore, the nation cannot waiver from its course of committing to ensuring that people living with autism have access to the lifelong care and services needed to pursue their full potential and happiness; and

WHEREAS, with so many school-aged children being identified as having ASD, over five hundred thousand young people will become adults with autism in the next few years, and both the nation and individual states and localities must stand ready to assist these young people in successfully transitioning to rewarding careers and fulfilling adult lives; and

WHEREAS, the recently reenacted Autism CARES Act is federal legislation approving a five-year allocation to research for developing new treatments and therapies and to enhance services for those with Autism Spectrum Disorder throughout their lives, an ongoing commitment to these citizens; and

WHEREAS, the legislation also expanded the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee to include representatives from seventeen federal agencies and stakeholders from the autism community, and the enhanced public-private partnerships made possible by these efforts continue to provide support to those with autism and represents that continuing commitment to these citizens; and

WHEREAS, through the federal Department of Labor's Youth Policy Development Center and the Apprenticeship Inclusion Model initiative, the nation is providing expanding opportunities for Americans with ASD to develop high-demand skills that pair with good-paying jobs in order to guarantee a successful path to economic security through adulthood for those with ASD; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana stands with the national and international ASD communities, particularly by way of joining in this international recognition, to uphold our resolve to work to promote more meaningful connections of respect and to build a society where everyone has the opportunity to succeed, offering the promise of a chance to succeed independently.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby declare April 2nd as World Autism Awareness Day in Louisiana, annually.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Autism Society Louisiana State Chapter, Inc. (LSAC).

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES