

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

THE AUTISM COMMUNITY NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT COSPONSOR S. 819, THE AUTISM TREATMENT ACCELERATION ACT

May 12, 2009

Dear Colleague:

We are writing to urge you to support S. 819, the Autism Treatment Acceleration Act of 2009.

Autism is a complex disorder that the CDC estimates affects 1 in 150 children. Autism spectrum disorders impose physical, psychological, social, and financial challenges on the children and adults who are affected, on their families and on their communities. Autism is very often a significant contributor to severe family financial difficulties, and marital and family disruption. There are no known cures for autism spectrum disorders, but there are behavioral and educational treatment approaches that can enhance quality of life and maximize independence.

Building on the overwhelmingly bipartisan Combating Autism Act of 2006, our legislation includes:

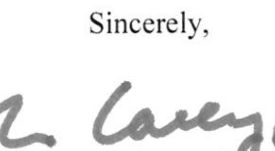
- a demonstration project to develop Autism Care Centers—comprehensive treatment facilities that provide a full array of medical, behavioral, mental health, educational and family care services to individuals and families in a single location;
- a demonstration project to provide an array of services to adults with autism spectrum disorders;
- a voluntary population-based autism case registry;
- a national multimedia campaign focused on needs throughout the lifespan;
- an Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee to build upon the work of the existing Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee;
- a National Network to strengthen linkages between existing research and service initiatives;
- and a national training initiative on autism.


The bill also requires insurers to provide coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders, including coverage of Applied Behavior Analysis therapy.

Please join us as co-sponsor of this legislation. For further information, please contact Sara Singleton (Durbin, 4-2152), Morna Murray (Casey, 4-6324) or Emma Palmer (Menendez, 4-4744).

Sincerely,


Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator


Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator


Robert Menendez
United States Senator