

House Concurrent Resolution No. 6

94TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

0897L.011

AN ACT

Relating to recognition of autism awareness day and autism awareness month.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Whereas, it is estimated that more the 1.5 million Americans live with some form of autism, including more than 100,000 children served under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and

Whereas, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education recently identified 3,393 children between the ages of 3 and 21 as autistic, an increase of 1,000% from the 294 children identified in 1991; and

Whereas, the increase in autism spectrum disorder's prevalence across the entire United States is an urgent public health concern, with the frequency of autism spectrum disorders now surpassing that of all types of cancer combined; and

Whereas, while autism is not a curable disorder, recent studies have shown that early intervention can have dramatic results for children which allows them to enjoy a productive and independent life; and

Whereas, because many insurance companies and government assistance does not fully cover the costs of services associated with autism, many families are spending in excess of \$70,000 a year for services for their children; and

Whereas, during the month of April the autism community around the United States will be involved in many activities to increase awareness of autism:

24 **Now, therefore, be it resolved** that the members of the House of
25 Representatives of the Ninety-fourth General Assembly, First Regular Session, the Senate
26 concurring therein, hereby:

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28 (1) Recognize April twenty-seventh of each year as "Autism Awareness Day" and the
29 month of April each year as "Autism Awareness Month" in Missouri;

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31 (2) Recognize and commend the parents and relatives of children with autism for their
32 sacrifice and dedication in providing for the special needs of children with autism and for
33 absorbing significant financial costs for specialized education and support services;

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35 (3) Stress the need to begin early intervention services soon after an individual has been
36 diagnosed with autism, noting that early intervention strategies are the primary therapeutic
37 options for individuals with autism and early intervention significantly improves outcomes for
38 individuals with autism and can reduce the level of funding and services needed later in life;

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40 (4) Recognize the shortage of appropriately trained teachers who have the skills and
41 support necessary to teach, assist, and respond to special needs students, including those students
42 with autism; and

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44 (5) Recognize the importance of worker training programs that meet the needs of
45 developmentally disabled individuals, including those individuals with autism, and note that
46 individuals with autism can be and are productive members of the workforce if they are given
47 appropriate support, training, and early intervention services; and

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49 **Be it further resolved** that this resolution be sent to the Governor for his
50 approval or rejection pursuant to the Missouri Constitution.

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