

TESTIMONY

HCR150

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

Report Title: Autism Awareness Month; April; Outreach and Awareness on Autism

Description:

Companion: HR113

Package: None

Current Referral: HTH

Introducer(s): MORIKAWA, BROWER, CHING, EVANS, FONTAINE, HANOHANO, ICHIYAMA, JORDAN, C. LEE, LUKE, NISHIMOTO, TAKUMI, THIELEN, TOKIOKA, TSUJI, WARD

HTH
Committee Hearing
04-12-2012



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:
File:

Senate Committee on Health

**H.C.R. 150, DECLARING THE MONTH OF APRIL OF EACH YEAR AS
AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH IN HAWAI'I**

**Testimony of Loretta J. Fuddy, A.C.S.W., M.P.H.
Director of Health**

April 12, 2012

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health (DOH) supports H.C. R. 150 to designate April as
2 Autism Awareness Month in Hawai'i. Early screening, evaluation, and intervention services for young
3 children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) can help to improve their development and ability to
4 reach their full potential.

5 **Fiscal Implications:** None.

6 **Purpose and Justification:** This resolution designates the month of April of each year as Autism
7 Awareness Month, to increase awareness of the importance of screening for ASD in young children.

8 Screening for autism using standardized screening tools is recommended for young children at
9 18 and 24 months of age. Early screening and evaluation, followed by early intervention (EI) services,
10 can support young children with ASD in their development of skills needed later in school and as they
11 transition to adult life.

12 The importance and need for services for children with ASD is highlighted by data from the
13 National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) 2009-2010 which show
14 disparities for children and youth with ASD age 0-17 years. In comparison to CSHCN who do not have
15 ASD, CSHCN with ASD are less likely to have families that partner in decision-making, receive care

1 within a medical home, have adequate health insurance for needed services, have families that find the
2 community-based services are easy to use, and receive needed services to transition to adult life
3 (*CSHCN system of care core outcomes*).

4 The DOH Early Intervention Section (EIS) provides EI services for over 2,000 children age 0-3
5 years with or at biological risk for developmental delays, including children with ASD. Intensive
6 behavioral support services are provided for approximately 200 children with ASD each year.

7 The DOH Developmental Disabilities Division (DDD) provides a variety of individualized
8 supports to over 3,500 individuals, of which many are children and adults with ASD. The DDD website
9 includes information on national and local resources for individuals with ASD and their caregivers.

10 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
919 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD, ROOM 113
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543
April 12, 2012

The Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Chair
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Health
Twenty-Sixth Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senators Green and Nishihara and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: HCR 150 – DECLARING THE MONTH OF APRIL OF EACH YEAR AS AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH IN HAWAII.

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities **STRONGLY SUPPORTS HCR 150**. The purpose of the resolutions is to declare the month of April of each year as autism awareness month.

Autism is included in a group of autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). There are three types of ASD, 1) autistic disorder, 2) asperger syndrome and 3) pervasive developmental disorder. ASDs are considered developmental disabilities that can have significant challenges on an individual's behavioral, communication and social skills.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, it is estimated that between 1 in 80 and 1 in 240 with an average of 1 in 110 children in the United States have autism spectrum disorders (ASDs). That rate is anticipated to increase in the next decade as noted in the fourth WHEREAS clause, autism is growing at a startling rate of ten to seventeen percent per year.

Education and awareness about autism is important to inform the public about ASDs and the emerging trends and services available for individuals and families. Several initiatives are underway such as Act Early and Learn the Signs that are supported by the Hawaii Maternal Child Health Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities program and various autism organizations in Hawaii. The Council believes that public awareness about ASD should be an

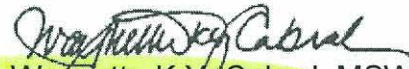
The Honorable Josh Green, M.D., Chair
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
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April 12, 2012

ongoing activity throughout the year. However, designating the month of April as Autism Awareness Month would fall in line with National Autism Awareness Month, and would provide a wonderful opportunity for Hawaii's advocates and state and private agencies to work together to educate the community about ASDs.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HCR 150.

Sincerely,


Liz Ann Salvador
Chair


Waynette K.Y. Cabral, MSW
Executive Administrator



April 11, 2012

Via Email: HTHtestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov

Senator Joshua Green, M.D.
Chair, Committee on Health
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 222

Re: HCR150 – Declaring the Month of April of Each Year as Autism Awareness Month in Hawaii
Hearing date & time: Thursday, April 12, 2012 at 1:45 p.m.
Conference Room 229

Dear Chair Green and Members of the Committee on Health:

I am Lorri Unumb, Vice President, State Government Affairs, of Autism Speaks. Autism Speaks was founded in February 2005 and has grown into the nation's largest autism science and advocacy organization, dedicated to funding research into the causes, prevention, treatments and a cure for autism; increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders; and advocating for the needs of individuals with autism and their families.

Autism Speaks submits testimony in **strong support of HCR150**, which declares the month of April of each year as autism awareness month in Hawaii.

Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that inhibits a person's ability to communicate and develop social relationships, and is often accompanied by behavioral challenges. Autism spectrum disorders are diagnosed in **one in 88 children** in the United States, affecting four times as many boys as girls. The prevalence of autism increased 57 percent from 2002 to 2006. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has called autism an urgent public health concern for which the cause and cure remain unknown.

However, the U.S. Surgeon General has reported that treatment for autism can spare an individual from life-long dependency as a ward of the state. In the absence of health insurance coverage, families are often required to pay out-of-pocket for treatments that can cost upwards of \$50,000 per year. In the process, many risk their homes and the educations of their unaffected children – essentially mortgaging their entire futures. Worse yet, children born into families without means go untreated. Without treatment, these individuals become a significant financial burden on the state. According to a Harvard School of Public Health study, the lifetime societal cost of autism

is estimated to be \$3.2 million per person. This cost can be reduced dramatically or eliminated with appropriate intervention.

Autism Speaks has advocated for the enactment of insurance legislation at the state level across the nation. So far, **30 states** have adopted insurance coverage legislation: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan¹, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. In the states where the laws are effective, individuals with autism are making remarkable progress, and the impact on premiums has been minimal. The average fiscal impact across five of the early-adopting states that have reported data is approximately 31 cents per month for each member of the plan as a result of the added autism benefit.

In Hawaii, a number of measures providing insurance coverage for autism spectrum disorder were considered before the Legislature this session. While these bills have failed to move forward this session, we firmly believe that further education is necessary to bring awareness to the issues regarding autism spectrum disorder and its treatment, and to provide support for the Hawaii children and families who struggle with everyday impacts of not having adequate access to treatment.

We therefore respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of HCR150.

Lorri Unumb, Esq., Vice President
State Government Affairs
Autism Speaks
803-582-9905

¹ Michigan's bill will be signed into law on April 18, 2012.

DATE: Monday, April 9, 2012

ATTN: Senate Committee on Health
Senator Josh Green M.D., Chair
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland
Senator Maile S.L. Shimabukuro
Senator Glenn Wakai
Senator Sam Slom

HEARING DATE: Thursday, April 12, 2012

HEARING PLACE: Conference Room 229 – State Capitol – 415 South Beratania St.

TIME: 1:45 p.m.

Dear Committee on Health,

My name is **Andrea Long** and I am a graduate student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa Myron B Thompson School of Social Work. I am submitting testimony in strong support of HCR 150, which declares the month of April as “Autism Awareness Month.”

In the 1990s, scientists thought autism was a rare disorder that affected 1 in every 2,000 kids. Today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that autism affects 1 in every 88 children. The fact that the prevalence rate has dramatically increased is both alarming and a cause for concern.

According to the Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, the cost of autism over the lifespan is 3.2 million dollars per person. However, the cost of lifelong care can be reduced by 2/3 with early diagnosis and intervention.

Early intervention can greatly improve a child’s development. The first three years of life are particularly critical. And that is why educating people to be able to recognize the signs of autism early are very important. So children can get treatment when it is most likely to be effective.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strongly support of HCR 150.**

Sincerely,

Andrea Long

Green4 - Mailene

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, April 11, 2012 3:47 PM
To: HTHTestimony
Cc: epandjp90@hotmail.com
Subject: Testimony for HCR150 on 4/12/2012 1:45:00 PM

Testimony for HTH 4/12/2012 1:45:00 PM HCR150

Conference room: 229
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jeraul S. Pladera
Organization: Individual
E-mail: epandjp90@hotmail.com
Submitted on: 4/11/2012

Comments:

As a parent of an adult son with autism I feel this resolution would be a positive way to bring light to this topic in the community. I want to thank our the legislature's commitment to helping to educate the public and protecting our most vulnerable in our society.