



August 30, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker
The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries,
Democratic Leader

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers,
Chair
The Honorable Frank Pallone, Ranking
Member
House Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Majority
Leader
The Honorable Mitch McConnell,
Republican Leader
The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Chair
The Honorable Bill Cassidy, Ranking
Member
Senate Health, Education, Labor and
Pensions Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear House and Senate Leaders,

We commend you for introducing and advancing bipartisan bills to reauthorize the Autism CARES Act in the House and Senate (H.R. 7213 and S. 4762). These bills represent significant progress, addressing many of the critical recommendations provided by the Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) DD, Autism, and Family Support Task Force in September 2023 (see attached letter). Given that the current authorization is set to expire at the end of September, we strongly urge you to work collaboratively and expeditiously to ensure that the Autism CARES Act is renewed *before* that deadline with the enhancements that were included in both the House and Senate bills.

We are particularly pleased that both bills focus on crucial areas such as addressing barriers in developmental pediatrics; strengthening capacity of LEND programs; enhancing communication supports for Autistic individuals; and ensuring transparency and accountability in Autism research.

As the September 30 deadline rapidly approaches, we urge you to work together in the coming weeks to ensure that the reauthorization, including the many enhancements in

both bills, moves forward quickly in early September. **It is imperative that Congress passes this vital legislation without delay upon returning from recess.**

The reauthorization of the Autism CARES Act is essential to the continued support and advancement of research, training, and services that benefit individuals with Autism and their families. Your leadership is crucial in ensuring this Act is reauthorized before the deadline.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Access Ready, Inc.

Allies for Independence

American Academy of Pediatrics

American Music Therapy Association

Association of University Center on Disabilities

Autistic and Nonbinary Network

Autistic Self-Advocacy Network

Autism Society of America

Autism Speaks

Communication 4 ALL

Disability Belongs

Institute for Exceptional Care

National Association of Councils on Disabilities

National Association of State Developmental Disabilities Services

National Center for Parent Leadership, Advocacy, & Community Empowerment

National Disability Rights Network

National Down Syndrome Congress

National Down Syndrome Society

National Respite Coalition

TASH

The Arc of the United States

Tourette Association of America

United States International Council on Disabilities

The Consortium for Constituents with Disabilities (CCD) is the largest coalition of national organizations working together to advocate for Federal public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society free from racism, ableism, sexism, and xenophobia, as well as LGBTQ+ based discrimination and religious intolerance.