

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
August 28, 2019

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Attorney General Balderas Seeks Congressional Support for Autism Services

Albuquerque, NM---Attorney General Hector Balderas today announced that he is joining a bipartisan coalition of 47 attorneys general calling upon Congress to authorize the Autism CARES Act of 2019. This legislation provides ongoing federal support for research into autism spectrum disorders (“ASD”) and services to those affected by these conditions.

“We must protect vulnerable New Mexicans and provide them all of the services possible to ensure their safety and well being,” said Attorney General Balderas. “I am calling on Congress to continue supporting this critical research into autism spectrum disorders so that we can ensure those impacted by it have every resource they need.”

A previous version of this legislation is set to expire on Sept. 30, 2019. The CARES Act of 2019 currently exists as H.R. 1058 in the U.S. House of Representatives and S. 427 in the U.S. Senate. Congress began addressing autism in 2000 with the first enactment of the bill. The Autism CARES Act of 2019 will continue Congress’ ongoing mission to ensure that those living with ASD receive the necessary support and research.

Attached, see the coalition’s letter to Congress and the House and Senate versions of the CARES Act of 2019.

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Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor and Pensions
428 Senate Dirksen Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Congressional Leaders,

We, a bipartisan group of attorneys general, ardently request that you reauthorize the Autism CARES Act since the current law¹ sunsets on

1850 M Street, NW
Twelfth Floor
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 326-6000
<http://www.naag.org/>

¹ 42 U.S.C.A. § 284g

September 30, 2019. The number of individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders (“ASD”) continues to rise, and the Autism CARES Act of 2019, H.R. 1058 and S. 427, responds to this national concern with a cohesive interagency effort.

According to the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, one out of every fifty-nine children in America is diagnosed with ASD. Yet, ASD within minority communities tends to be diagnosed less often and much later. Reauthorizing the Autism CARES Act will specifically incentivize ASD programs and research in America’s rural and underdeveloped communities.

Nearly half of 25-year old individuals with ASD have never held employment²; as a result, the CARES Act of 2019 prioritizes community-based solutions to better incorporate adults with ASD into society. Research indicates that job activities encourage independence that relieves autism-related symptoms while reinforcing daily life skills.³ In addition, this may help alleviate some of the strain on parents of individuals with ASD. On average, mothers of children with ASD are only able to maintain about half as many work hours as mothers without children with ASD.⁴

ASD impacts hundreds of thousands of Americans. Congress began addressing autism in 2000 with the first enactment of the bill. The 161 cosponsors of the current House and Senate bills and the 118+ bipartisan members of the Congressional Coalition for Autism Research and Education demonstrate its significance. The Autism CARES Act of 2019 will continue Congress’ ongoing mission to ensure that those living with ASD receive the necessary support and research. Therefore, we, the undersigned attorneys general, ask you to support and to enact the Autism CARES Act of 2019 before September 30, 2019.

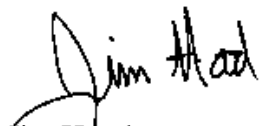
Sincerely Yours,



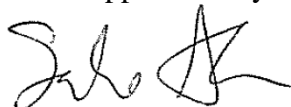
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Kevin G. Clarkson
Alaska Attorney General



Jim Hood
Mississippi Attorney General



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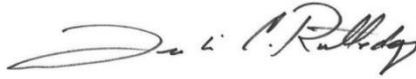
²Anna M. Roux, Paul C. Shattuck, *et al*, *Postsecondary Empl. Experiences Among Young Adults With an Autism Spectrum Disorder*, *J. Am. Acad. Child Adolescent Psych.* 2013 Sept., 52(9): 931–939 (July 31, 2013) (available at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3753691/).

³Vanessa Hus Bal, So-Hyun Kim, *et al*, *Daily Living Skills in Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder from 2 to 21 Years of Age*, *Autism*. 2015 Oct; 19(7): 774–784 (April 28, 2015) (available at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4912002/).

⁴Khim Lynn Ooi, Yin Sin Ong, *et al*, *A Meta-Synthesis On Parenting a Child with Autism*, *Neuropsych. Disorder Treatment* 2016; 12: 745–762 (April 5, 2016) (available at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4827600/).



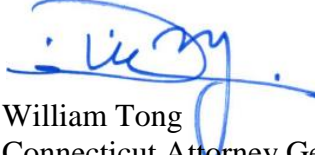
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Leslie Rutledge
Arkansas Attorney General



Phil Weiser
Colorado Attorney General



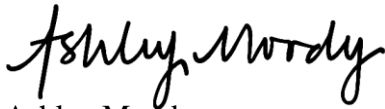
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Kathleen Jennings
Delaware Attorney General



Karl A. Racine
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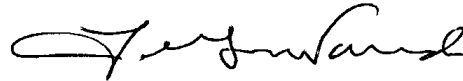
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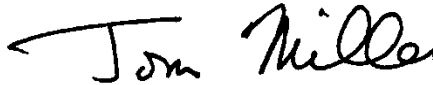
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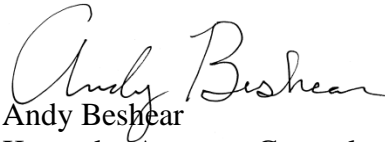
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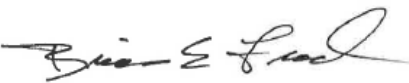
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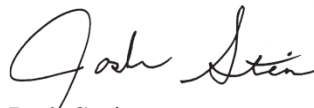
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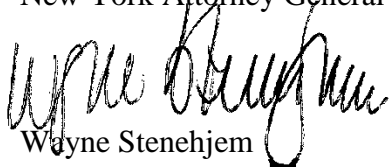
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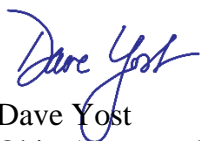
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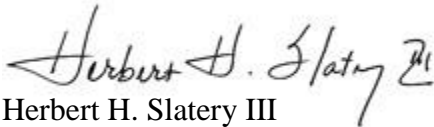
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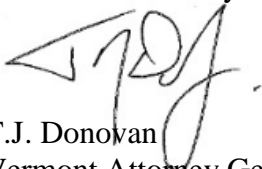
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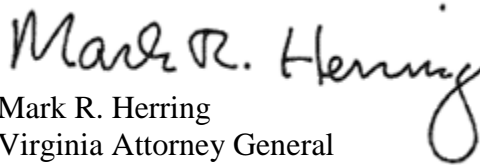
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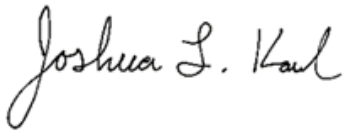
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