



Proud Aspy Mom Newsletter | January 2022



Membership Matters

As we begin another year I am reminded of our commitment, individually and collectively to our community. In my "day" job my team and I work with local, regional, state, and national legislators on key issues. Our goal is to educate leaders in some cases and learn about their advocacy in others. While researching for this month's newsletter I became curious about our leaders' dedication to discussing autistic challenges and triumphs. I must say I was pleasantly surprised.

Congressmen Mike Doyle and Chris Smith founded the Autism Caucus in 2001. Their goal was simple, to educate and enlighten their peers on issues that matter to families like ours.

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[Autism Caucus Membership | Congressman Mike Doyle](#)

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April 28, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole,

Thank you for your longstanding leadership in advancing funding for research, services, and supports that benefit children and adults with autism and their families across our country. The funding provided by this Subcommittee over the past decade has made a tremendous difference in improving our understanding of autism, increasing awareness, and enhancing services across our nation. Despite the progress that has been made, significant gaps remain. Therefore, for the FY2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations (LHHS) bill, we urge the Subcommittee to align with the

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations (LHHS) bill, we urge the Subcommittee to align with the recommendations of the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) by providing an additional \$150 million for autism related activities.

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I cannot tell you how many times I sat alongside of many other moms, waiting in line to speak to state leaders to ask for **HELP**.

- **HELP** for funding with Autism Research
- **HELP** with access to funds to take care of persons living with Autism
- **HELP** with maintaining laws that protect Autistic persons in the K-12 environment and beyond
- **HELP** with transitional programs to help those with ASD mainstream into our society
- **HELP** with educating the public on why this segment of the population matters.

Sometimes we must pause to say thank you. In this polarized political climate, a bi-partisan group of leaders within the Autism Caucus makes a conscience decision to increase awareness and impact policy, initiate future research, create positive and informative forums, call private and public actors to collaborate advanced therapies for those with autism spectrum disorder and alleviating the cost of caring for loved ones living on the spectrum,

Florida Delegation - Autism Caucus



About | Congressman Gus Bilirakis

Congressman Gus M. Bilirakis is a Republican from Palm Harbor, representing Florida's 12th Congressional District, which includes all of Pasco and northern parts of Pinellas and Hillsborough counties.

bilirakis.house.gov

Biography | U.S. Representative Charlie Crist

Charlie Crist is honored to represent Florida's 13th, the most beautiful congressional district in the country. The district covers Pinellas County from Clearwater down through St. Pete, where he grew up. Charlie has sp...

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About Ted Deutch | Office of Congressman Ted Deutch

Congressman Ted Deutch represents Florida's 22nd district, home to communities in northern Broward County and southeastern Palm Beach County in South Florida



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Biography | U.S. Representative Stephanie Murphy

U.S. Congresswoman Stephanie Murphy proudly represents Florida's Seventh Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. The district includes all of Seminole County and much of northern Orange County, including downtown Orlando, Maitland, Winter Park, and the University of Central Florida.



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Biography | Congressman Bill Posey : Representing the 8th District of Florida



Congressman Bill Posey represents Florida's 8th Congressional District which encompasses all of Brevard and Indian River Counties, and a small portion of Orange County (Bithlo, Christmas and Wedgefield). Posey, a Republican, was elected to U.S. House of Representatives in 2008 and is currently serving his seventh term.

[More Info](#)

About | Congressman Darren Soto

Darren Soto was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2016 to represent Florida's 9th Congressional District, which includes all of Osceola and parts of Orange and Polk Counties.

[Read Bio](#)



Biography | Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz attended the University of Florida where she served as president of the Student Senate and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in ...

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The Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee, IACC, created under the CARES ACT requires our leaders to debate, deliberate and evaluate best practices for the Autistic Community. For families who need access, KNOW we

have it. It is our obligation to support leaders who advocate on our behalf. THE MORE YOU KNOW- THE MORE YOU GROW! While we should not polarize CARE - as a community we often do because we fail to walk in the footsteps of those who are impacted from issues we cannot relate to. SO- thank you Florida Delegation. THANK YOU for CARING and CONTINUING to CARRY the message of HOPE for families like ours.



[IACC Overview | IACC](#)

IACC Overview. The Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) is a Federal advisory committee that coordinates Federal efforts and provides advice to the Secretary of Health and Human Services on issues related to autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

[Click to Learn More](#)

113th Congress (2013-2014): Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support Act of 2014 | Congress.gov - Congress.gov | Library of Congress

Summary of S.2449 - 113th Congress (2013-2014): Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support Act of 2014



[Read to Read Summary](#)

Adulting?



Dr. Temple Grandin

[READ MORE ABOUT IT](#)

Dr. Temple Grandin is an Autistic person specializing in Autistic Behavior. Recently she spoke about the concept of "adulting". I love reading the evolution of her journey. Dr. Grandin grew up in a time when there was little connectivity and/or understanding about what autism is and most importantly how an autistic person functions in the world. As a result of her significant research and candor, we now know so much more about this population and how we as a community can help those living with ASD thrive.

The truth is it is not rocket science. When it comes down to it, COMMUNICATION is key to how we survive. When we engage with someone who speaks another language, somehow, we are able to relate to them. It is no different and if you HEAR Dr. Grandin's story or watch her Oscar Winning life story, you are reminded quickly that we all ADULT the same.

Of course we now have different avenues to get a glimpse into an autistic person's life. Take, Mary Berridge's photo documentary. Through her eyes we have a front row view of the nuances of autism because of her quiet

perception. It is in the quiet moments that you truly SEE a person with ASD, you truly HEAR what they hear and SENSE what they experience. Although you cannot experience their truth, it certainly helps families with ASD to know they are SEEN.



'Visible Spectrum' Mary Berridge's moving photos show autism in a new light - CNN Style

GET MORE INFORMATION

Over the past decade our family has seen tremendous swaths of transition. We hope our transparency helps others along their journey. The desired resources we once had such difficulty obtaining are more readily available. Education and access create EQUITY. You are NEVER alone!

Autism Shifts- Free Seminar, January 31st on the issue of Transitions

GET TICKETS

Until next time~

In case you missed it ... view our December [Newsletter](#)

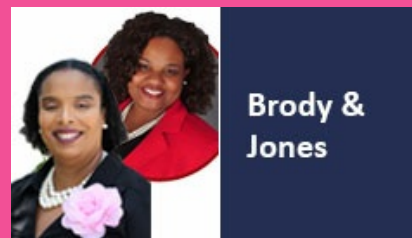
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