



ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY CENTERS ON DISABILITIES
THE LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION, ADVOCACY & RESEARCH NETWORK

February 6, 2019

The Honorable Chris Smith
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20501

Dear Congressman Chris Smith,

On behalf of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD), this letter is to thank you for your outstanding work and leadership on behalf of individuals with autism spectrum disorders and related developmental disabilities. AUCD strongly supports your bipartisan bill, the Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support Act of 2019, which will prevent the sunset or expiration in September of this year of Autism CARES.

The prevalence of autism is growing. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network, autism now affects one in every 59 children. The Autism CARES Act has shown significant progress in increasing the capacity of professionals to screen, diagnose, treat and support individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). However, substantial gaps still remain, which is why it is so critical to reauthorize the Autism CARES Act and sustain the momentum of the work that has begun under this law.

The membership of AUCD includes a national network – serving every state and territory – of 67 University Centers for Excellence (UCEDD), 52 Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) programs, and 14 Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Centers (IDDRC). Together, these programs provide a direct national impact through direct services, the development of new professionals, and the use of new knowledge generated from our research.

Again, AUCD applauds your commitment to individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities and will do all that we can to help to move this legislation quickly through Congress to continue these vital activities.

Sincerely,

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