



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AUCD Applauds the Senate for Passage of the Autism CARES Act

SILVER SPRING, MD – AUCD applauds the Senate for passage of the Autism CARES Act of 2024. This bipartisan, bicameral bill is crucial to maintaining and improving the monitoring, training, and research programs throughout the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services focused on children and adults with autism, people with other neurodevelopmental disabilities, and their families.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network, autism now affects one in every 36 children.

The reauthorized CARES Act will expand research, increase public awareness and surveillance, and improve the capacity of the interdisciplinary health professional training programs that support individuals with autism and other neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families.

The CARES Act was unanimously passed in the Senate by voice vote. The CARES Act is sponsored in the Senate by Senators Ben Ray Luján (D-NM) and Susan Collins (R-ME). In the House of Representatives, the bill is sponsored by the co-chairs of the Autism Caucus, Representatives Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Henry Cuellar (D-TX).

“AUCD commends Congress on its unwavering commitment to improving the lives of people with autism and their families. We are grateful to Senator Luján, Senator Collins, Representative Smith, and Representative Cuellar for their leadership to get the CARES Act reauthorized this Congress. AUCD also thanks the AUCD Network, self-advocates, family members, and other leaders in the disability community for their efforts to educate Members of Congress to understand the importance of this bill, the work it supports, and the needs of people with autism in each state and territory,” said AUCD

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Public Policy Director Cindy Smith. “We look forward to continuing to work with leaders in Congress and in the community to make a positive impact in the lives of people with autism and their families.”

The membership of AUCD includes a national Network—serving every state and territory—of 68 University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), 60 Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Programs, and 15 Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Research Centers (IDDRCs). Together, these Centers and Programs provide a direct national impact through direct services, the development of new professionals, and the use of new knowledge generated from our research.

AUCD is available for contact. Please contact Cindy Smith, Director of Public Policy, at csmith@aucd.org.

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