

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
COUNCIL BILL 12-0033R
(Resolution)**

Introduced by: Councilmembers Mosby, Henry, Stokes, Kraft, Branch, Holton, Middleton,
Cole, Scott, Spector, Clarke, Reisinger, President Young, Councilmembers Welch, Curran
Introduced and adopted: March 19, 2012

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION CONCERNING

Autism Awareness Month - April 2012

1
2 FOR the purpose of joining the international efforts to raise awareness of the autism crisis and
3 impart information regarding the importance of early diagnosis and early intervention to
4 families affected by autism by recognizing April as Autism Awareness Month.

Recitals

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6 Today, 1 to 1.5 million Americans, including 1% of U.S. children between the ages of 3 and
7 17, live with an autism spectrum disorder, according to Autism Society figures. Also according
8 to those figures, over the last 20 years, autism has been the fastest growing developmental
9 disorder, with a shocking 1,148% growth rate. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
10 have called autism a national public health crisis whose cause and cure remain unknown. And
11 yet, autism remains a poorly understood disorder that gets much less attention and funding than
12 many far less prevalent diseases.

13 Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three
14 years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. It is defined
15 by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals differently and
16 to varying degrees. There is no known single cause of autism, but increased awareness and
17 funding can help families today.

18 In 10 years, if nothing is done to change current trends, autism's annual costs to society could
19 rise from the current \$60 - \$90 billion a year to as much as \$400 billion. However, early
20 diagnosis and intervention can both greatly improve the quality of life for those affected by
21 autism, and reduce the life-time costs of their care by 2/3.

22 In an effort to help more families affected by autism realize these benefits, in 2007 the United
23 Nations General Assembly declared April 2nd to be World Autism Awareness Day. Since then,
24 activists worldwide have used the month of April to shine a bright light on autism as a growing
25 global health concern through activities to help increase and develop world knowledge of the
26 autism crisis and impart information regarding the importance of early diagnosis and early
27 intervention. Additionally, World Autism Day and Autism Awareness Month celebrate the
28 unique talents and skills of people with autism, and feature community events around the world
29 where individuals with autism and their families are warmly welcomed and embraced.

EXPLANATION: Underlining indicates matter added by amendment.
~~Strike out~~ indicates matter deleted by amendment.

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1 These efforts have spread to events in more than 65 countries on six continents, including
2 events right here in Baltimore. Together, these events have proven to be effective in raising
3 awareness, and steering families toward the resources that are available to help children affected
4 by autism get the most out of their lives.

5 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE,** That the
6 Council joins in the international efforts to raise awareness of the autism crisis and impart
7 information regarding the importance of early diagnosis and early intervention to families
8 affected by autism by recognizing April as Autism Awareness Month.

9 **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the
10 CEO of Baltimore City Public Schools, the Health Commissioner, and the Mayor's Legislative
11 Liaison to the City Council.