



AUTISM SPEAKS®

May 25, 2016

Chairman Edward R. Royce
The House Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Eliot L. Engel
The House Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Amendment to the Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to S. 1635 Offered by Mr. Smith of New Jersey

Dear Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel:

I am writing on behalf of Autism Speaks to support Representative Chris Smith's amendment regarding coverage of applied behavior analysis (ABA) and other evidence-based therapies for dependents of Department of State personnel covered under the Foreign Service Benefit Plan.

As you know, one in sixty-eight children has an autism spectrum disorder. Historically, coverage of evidence-based care for children with an autism spectrum disorder has been lacking, but that pattern has been and is changing, both for private and public sector employees. ABA coverage is now available for military dependents and beginning in 2017, will be part of the coverage for all Federal Employees Health Benefit Program plans.

We commend efforts to extend ABA and other evidence-based care to the children of Foreign Service officers who, like the members of the Armed Forces, may move frequently and have difficulty accessing care. ABA is a proven treatment that can make a difference in the life of a child. Like their counterparts in the private and public sectors, Foreign Service officers should have ABA and other evidence-based coverage for their children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Stuart Spielman". The signature is fluid and cursive, extending across the width of the page.

Stuart Spielman, Esq.
Senior Policy Advisor and Counsel