

Rep. Smith's Autism CARES Act of 2024: What Advocacy Groups Are Saying

Autism New Jersey

"Since it was first enacted in 2006, the Autism CARES Act has been the primary source of federal funding for autism research, services, training, and prevalence monitoring," said Suzanne Buchanan, Executive Director of Autism New Jersey. "Working collaboratively with colleagues on both sides of the aisle, Congressman Smith's leadership shepherded this critical reauthorization that reaffirms the federal government's commitment to our community and strengthens its response to address the substantial disparities in safety, access to healthcare and treatment, and basic quality of life experienced by the entire population of individuals with autism."

Autism Speaks

"Today, we stand with Rep. Chris Smith and countless autistic people and their families across the nation to celebrate the passage of the Autism CARES Act of 2024," said Keith Wargo, President and CEO of Autism Speaks. "Since co-founding the Congressional Autism Caucus in 2001, Rep. Smith has been a tireless leader for autism policy, playing a leading role in every iteration of this landmark legislation. We are deeply appreciative for his longstanding work, enduring leadership and partnership with Autism Caucus co-chair Rep. Henry Cuellar to advance this bipartisan reauthorization. As a result of their efforts, autistic people and their families will continue to benefit from the law's transformative impact. This forward-looking bill will spur progress in research, services, and supports for autistic people across the spectrum and throughout the lifespan for years to come."

Autism Society of America

"The Autism Society of America deeply appreciates Representative Chris Smith's unwavering commitment to supporting the Autism community. His leadership is highly valued across our nationwide network," said Christopher S. Banks, President and CEO of the Autism Society of America. "The reauthorization of the Autism CARES Act, championed by Representative Smith, guarantees the continuation of vital research, services, and programs that enable individuals with Autism to live fulfilling and empowered lives."

Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD)

"AUCD is grateful for the steadfast commitment and leadership of Representative Chris Smith, Representative Cuellar, Senator Collins and Senator Ben Ray Lujan. The Autism CARES Act has made significant progress since first passed to coordinate and invest in research and training programs, such as the Leadership in Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities program, that improve the health and wellbeing of children and adults with autism and other developmental disabilities. It is because of the CARES Act that children are being diagnosed earlier. The bill passed today continues to build upon the progress made and makes important improvements to continue the progress," said Cindy Smith, Director of Public Policy, Association of University Centers for Disabilities.

Profound Autism Alliance

“Throughout the years, Representative Smith has proven his devotion to the entirety of the autism spectrum with his constant, positive, effective leadership. The iteration of the Autism CARES Act continues to reflect that dedication. We are thrilled that the Autism CARES Act includes language that will help further promote the health and connection of autistic people who need lifetime, 24/7 care,” said Judith Ursitti, co-founder and President, Profound Autism Alliance.