

Rep. Chatfield offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 52.

A resolution to declare April 2017 as Autism Awareness Month in the state of Michigan.

Whereas, On March 23, 2007, Congress designated April as National Autism Awareness Month, supporting efforts to increase funding for research into the causes and treatment of autism and to improve training and support for individuals with autism and those who care for individuals with autism; and

Whereas, Autism is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the normal functioning of the brain and impacts development in the areas of social interaction and communication skills; and

Whereas, The demands of living with a person with autism are great and families frequently experience significant financial costs for specialized education and support services. The uniqueness of each individual with autism makes the experience of living with autism different for each family; and

Whereas, Autism is a lifelong condition and the necessary support and treatment changes as people on the spectrum move through major life phases. Their quality of life depends not only upon the foundation that is provided in childhood, but on ongoing supports that are specific to the educational, medical, social, recreational, family, and employment needs of the individual; and

Whereas, Autism knows no racial, ethnic, social boundaries, family income, lifestyle, or educational levels, and can affect any family and any child. There are over 3.5 million Americans living with the effects of autism spectrum disorder; and

Whereas, Autism is the fastest-growing developmental disability in the United States. Autism prevalence is estimated at 1 in every 68 births and is four to five times more likely to occur in boys than in girls; and

Whereas, Early intervention services are the primary therapeutic option for young people with autism and that early intervention significantly improves the outcome for people with autism and can reduce the level of funding and services needed to treat people with autism later in life; and

Whereas, New opportunities are being created through collaborative efforts of family members, professionals, and all levels of government to bring about significant changes in the public perception of young people and adults with developmental disabilities, including those with autism, opening new doors to independent and productive lives; and

Whereas, The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council supports people with developmental disabilities, including those with autism, to achieve their life's dreams and ensure that all citizens of Michigan have the opportunities and support to achieve their full potential; and

Whereas, Numerous efforts to support individuals in Michigan have been made in recent years, including legislation enacted in 2012 to require insurance coverage of autism therapy treatment. Furthermore, the Michigan Autism Council was established by Executive Order to adopt and implement the Michigan Autism Spectrum Disorder Plan; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body declare April 2017 as Autism Awareness Month in the state of Michigan.