
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, AND OTHER RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS TO COLLABORATE AND DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN TO PREPARE FOR HAWAII'S PURSUIT OF FUNDING FOR AND PARTICIPATION IN THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION'S PUBLIC HEALTH SURVEILLANCE FOR ESTIMATING AUTISM PREVALENCE.

1 WHEREAS, autism spectrum disorder is a neurodevelopmental
2 condition that affects brain development and unfolds across an
3 individual's lifespan, impacting social communication, behavior,
4 and daily functioning; and

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6 WHEREAS, autism prevalence has increased dramatically, with
7 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now
8 estimating that one in thirty-six children in the United States
9 is affected, up from one in one hundred forty-nine in 2000; and

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11 WHEREAS, autism is estimated to cost the United States
12 approximately \$268,000,000,000 annually, covering medical,
13 therapeutic, and educational expenses, as well as productivity
14 losses for caregivers, with costs projected to increase
15 significantly in the coming years; and

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17 WHEREAS, research suggests that Asians, Native Hawaiians,
18 and other Pacific Islanders have a higher prevalence of autism,
19 with an estimated one in thirty affected, making it crucial for
20 Hawaii to gather accurate data to address the needs of its
21 communities; and

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23 WHEREAS, the CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities
24 Monitoring (ADDM) Network has been the primary source of autism
25 prevalence data in the United States, but Hawaii has never been
26 included in this national surveillance effort; and

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1 WHEREAS, the ADDM Network currently monitors autism
2 prevalence at sixteen sites across the continental United States
3 and Puerto Rico, using data from health and education records of
4 four- and eight-year-olds, yet Hawaii is not included in this
5 essential public health initiative; and

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7 WHEREAS, ADDM data collection has provided valuable
8 insights into autism trends, disparities in identification, and
9 gaps in access to services, and Hawaii's participation would
10 allow for a more precise understanding of autism prevalence and
11 impact among the State's diverse populations; and

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13 WHEREAS, discussions with the CDC have indicated that while
14 funding for new ADDM sites is not currently available, the CDC
15 is open to assisting in estimating autism prevalence across
16 Hawaii and training local teams in established public health
17 surveillance protocols; and

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19 WHEREAS, the federal Autism Collaboration, Accountability,
20 Research, Education, and Support Act of 2024 (Autism CARES Act),
21 signed into law on December 23, 2024, provides \$2,000,000,000
22 over five years, including \$28,000,000 annually for the CDC's
23 Developmental Disabilities Surveillance and Research Program,
24 increasing opportunities for Hawaii to seek future funding for
25 autism prevalence monitoring; and

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27 WHEREAS, the Autism CARES Act also includes further
28 provisions to address disparities in autism identification and
29 access to services, ensuring that historically underserved
30 populations, including those in Hawaii, receive necessary
31 support; and

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33 WHEREAS, participation in the CDC's autism prevalence
34 estimation requires a coordinated effort among state agencies,
35 research institutions, health care providers, and education
36 professionals to establish surveillance infrastructure, ensure
37 data collection and reporting capabilities, and develop long-
38 term strategies for improving autism-related services; and

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40 WHEREAS, Hawaii's participation in systematic autism
41 monitoring should be recognized as an opportunity to attract
42 national attention and additional funding, ensuring that



1 families across the State can access the early intervention,
2 educational, medical, and vocational services needed to support
3 the success of children with autism; and

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5 WHEREAS, Hawaii also faces critical workforce shortages in
6 early intervention providers, special educators, pediatricians,
7 and broader allied health professionals, including speech
8 language pathologists and occupational therapists, particularly
9 on neighbor islands; and

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11 WHEREAS, an investment in training, recruitment, and
12 retention is necessary to support children with autism and their
13 families; now, therefore,

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15 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
16 Thirty-third Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
17 of 2025, the Senate concurring, that the Department of
18 Education, Department of Health, and other relevant stakeholders
19 are urged to collaborate and develop a strategic plan to prepare
20 for Hawaii's pursuit of funding for and participation in the
21 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's public health
22 surveillance for estimating autism prevalence; and

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24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education,
25 Department of Health, and other relevant stakeholders are
26 requested to:

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28 (1) Identify necessary resources, training, and
29 infrastructure improvements to support comprehensive
30 data collection and analysis for the Centers for
31 Disease Control and Prevention's autism prevalence
32 estimation; and

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34 (2) Engage community organizations, health care providers,
35 and researchers to enhance autism-related services and
36 interventions based on the data collected; and

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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Health and
39 Department of Education are requested to establish public health
40 surveillance agreements and work toward executing the necessary
41 memorandums of understanding to facilitate autism data
42 collection; and



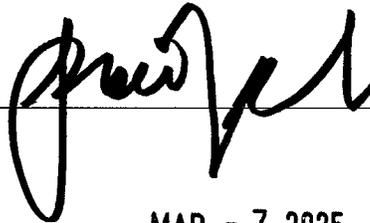
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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education and Department of Health are requested to provide a joint report outlining the steps taken and progress made toward participation in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's autism prevalence estimation to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor, Superintendent of Education, and Director of Health who in turn is requested to transmit copies to autism advocacy organizations within the State.

OFFERED BY:



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