

112TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2700

To establish a health and education grant program related to autism spectrum disorders, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 29, 2011

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself and Mr. DOYLE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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## A BILL

To establish a health and education grant program related to autism spectrum disorders, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Global Autism Assist-  
5 ance Act of 2011”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The occurrence of autism spectrum dis-  
9 orders (ASD) has increased during the past decade  
10 from an estimated one in 500 to an estimated one

1 in 110, according to data released by the Centers for  
2 Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in December  
3 2009. CDC classified as suffering from ASD chil-  
4 dren whose behaviors were consistent with the  
5 DSM-IV-TR criteria for Autistic Disorder,  
6 Asperger Disorder, and Pervasive Developmental  
7 Disorder—Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).

8 (2) Autism is a complex neurological disorder  
9 that affects an individual in the areas of social inter-  
10 action and communication. Because it is a spectrum  
11 disorder, it affects each individual differently and to  
12 varying degrees of severity. People with autism proc-  
13 ess and respond to information in unique ways. In  
14 some cases, coexisting medical issues and aggressive  
15 or self-injurious behavior may be present.

16 (3) The increased number of children diagnosed  
17 with autism is a growing and urgent concern for  
18 families, healthcare professionals, and educators, as  
19 the health and education systems struggle to re-  
20 spond to the needs of this population in a com-  
21 prehensive manner.

22 (4) The prevalence of autism in developing  
23 countries is also growing rapidly, and health and  
24 education systems in these countries are particularly  
25 ill-equipped to deal with these issues. According to

1 the World Health Organization, tens of millions of  
2 individuals in Africa are affected by autism.

3 (5) Children with autism who receive intensive  
4 and appropriate educational services before age five  
5 often make significant functional improvements. In  
6 the United States, significant efforts are being pur-  
7 sued to expand early diagnosis and the provision of  
8 these services. In a report on the identification, eval-  
9 uation and management of children with autism, the  
10 American Academy of Pediatrics recommended in  
11 November 2007 that all children should be screened  
12 for autism twice by the age of two, even if they have  
13 no symptoms. Early screening and services for au-  
14 tism are sorely lacking in most of the developing  
15 world. An opportunity exists to use United States  
16 expertise to significantly aid children and families in  
17 developing countries, for relatively small costs.

18 **SEC. 3. GLOBAL AUTISM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

19 (a) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—The Adminis-  
20 trator for the United States Agency for International De-  
21 velopment shall establish and administer a health and edu-  
22 cation grant program to be known as the “Global Autism  
23 Assistance Program” to—

24 (1) support activities under subsection (c)(2) by  
25 nongovernmental organizations and other service

1 providers, including advocacy groups, focused on au-  
2 tism in developing countries; and

3 (2) establish a “teach the teachers” program  
4 under subsection (d) to train health and education  
5 professionals working with children with autism in  
6 developing countries.

7 (b) DESIGNATION OF ELIGIBLE REGIONS.—Not later  
8 than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,  
9 the Administrator, in consultation with knowledgeable au-  
10 tism organizations such as the World Autism Organiza-  
11 tion, the Autism Society of America, and Autism Speaks,  
12 shall designate not fewer than two regions in developing  
13 countries that are determined to—

14 (1) require assistance in dealing with autism;  
15 and

16 (2) have sufficient familiarity with issues re-  
17 lated to autism to make effective use of the Global  
18 Autism Assistance Program.

19 (c) SELECTION OF IMPLEMENTING NGO.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
21 after the designation of eligible regions pursuant to  
22 subsection (b), the Administrator shall select and  
23 award a grant under this section to a nongovern-  
24 mental organization with experience in autism-re-  
25 lated issues to implement the Global Autism Assist-

1       ance Program through selection and awarding of  
2       grants to local service providers and advocacy groups  
3       focused on autism.

4               (2) ACTIVITIES.—A local service provider or ad-  
5       vocacy group that receives a grant under paragraph  
6       (1) may use such grant to carry out any of the fol-  
7       lowing activities (including, as appropriate, the  
8       translation into local languages of relevant English-  
9       language publications):

10               (A) EDUCATION AND OUTREACH TO THE  
11       PUBLIC.—Use public service announcements  
12       and other public media to help the public be-  
13       come more aware of the signs of autism so that  
14       children with autism can be diagnosed and  
15       treated earlier.

16               (B) SUPPORT TO FAMILIES.—Development  
17       of resources for families, such as online web re-  
18       source centers in local languages, dissemination  
19       of materials to parents of newly diagnosed chil-  
20       dren, such as information contained in the Cen-  
21       ters for Disease Control and Prevention’s publi-  
22       cation entitled “Learn the Signs, Act Early”, or  
23       other suitable alternatives, and dissemination of  
24       educational aids and guides to help parents  
25       with their children’s development.

1           (C) SUPPORT TO EDUCATIONAL INSTITU-  
2           TIONS.—Funding for schools or other edu-  
3           cational institutions, focusing on teachers of the  
4           youngest students, and including the distribu-  
5           tion of equipment or of the materials referred  
6           to in subparagraph (B).

7           (D) SUPPORT TO CLINICS AND MEDICAL  
8           CENTERS.—Provision of funding to clinics and  
9           medical centers with proven records in address-  
10          ing autism to assist with operating expenses, in-  
11          cluding personnel, equipment supplies, and fa-  
12          cilities, development of assessment testing for  
13          autism, and acquisition of specialized equip-  
14          ment, such as augmentative communication de-  
15          vices.

16          (3) APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS.—

17                (A) SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS.—To  
18                be eligible to receive a grant from the imple-  
19                menting nongovernmental organization, a local  
20                service provider or advocacy group shall submit  
21                to such implementing nongovernmental organi-  
22                zation an application at such time, in such  
23                manner, and containing such information as  
24                such implementing nongovernmental organiza-  
25                tion may require.

1 (B) ESTABLISHMENT OF SCREENING  
2 BOARD.—

3 (i) IN GENERAL.—The implementing  
4 nongovernmental organization responsible  
5 for implementing the Global Autism Assist-  
6 ance Program shall establish a screening  
7 board to be known as the “Project Advi-  
8 sory Board” to review for content and ap-  
9 propriateness applications from local serv-  
10 ice providers or advocacy groups submitted  
11 in accordance with subparagraph (A).

12 (ii) MEMBERSHIP.—The members of  
13 the Project Advisory Board shall be ap-  
14 pointed by the implementing nongovern-  
15 mental organization, in consultation with  
16 the Administrator, and in accordance with  
17 the following provisions:

18 (I) Each member shall serve for  
19 a term of one year and each member  
20 may serve as many as three consecu-  
21 tive terms.

22 (II) A member of the Project Ad-  
23 visory Board may continue to serve  
24 after the expiration of the term of

1 such member until such time as a suc-  
2 cessor is appointed.

3 (III) Membership of the Project  
4 Advisory Board shall include at least  
5 seven voting members who are mem-  
6 bers of autism advocacy groups, pro-  
7 fessionals working with autism, or  
8 otherwise associated with the autism  
9 community. Among the voting mem-  
10 bers of the Board shall be at least two  
11 parents from different families of indi-  
12 viduals with autism, one medical pro-  
13 fessional working with autism, one  
14 teacher of individuals with autism,  
15 and one individual who has autism.  
16 Efforts shall be made to include on  
17 the Project Advisory Board individ-  
18 uals with experience working in the  
19 developing world.

20 (IV) Membership of the Project  
21 Advisory Board shall include non-vot-  
22 ing members as determined appro-  
23 priate by the Administrator.

24 (V) Membership of the Project  
25 Advisory Board shall be chosen so as



1 to ensure objectivity and balance and  
2 to reduce the potential for conflicts of  
3 interest.

4 (4) SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE.—The imple-  
5 menting nongovernmental organization shall provide,  
6 contract for, and coordinate technical assistance in  
7 support of its mission in meeting the goals and pur-  
8 poses of this Act.

9 (d) TEACH THE TEACHERS.—The implementing non-  
10 governmental organization, acting on behalf of the Admin-  
11 istrator, in consultation with the Project Advisory Board,  
12 shall establish a program, to be known as the “Teach the  
13 Teachers Program”, to—

14 (1) identify health and education professionals  
15 to receive specialized training for teaching and work-  
16 ing with youth with autism, including training con-  
17 ducted in two- or three-day workshops at locations  
18 within one of the two regions designated pursuant to  
19 subsection (b); and

20 (2) conduct training through two- or three-day  
21 biomedical conferences in the two regions designated  
22 pursuant to subsection (b), including bringing med-  
23 ical and psychological specialists from the United  
24 States to train and educate parents and health pro-  
25 fessionals who deal with autism, including training

1 related to biomedical interventions that can affect  
2 autism, how nutrition and various metabolic issues  
3 can impact behavior, the role of applied behavioral  
4 analysis, and various occupational and speech thera-  
5 pies in fighting autism.

6 (e) FUNDING.—To carry out this Act, the Adminis-  
7 trator shall allocate amounts that have been appropriated  
8 or otherwise made available to the United States Agency  
9 for International Development.

10 (f) AUTISM DEFINED.—For purposes of this Act, the  
11 term “autism” means all conditions consistent with au-  
12 tism spectrum disorders described in section 2(1).

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