

Memorandum

Date: May 4, 1993

To: Senator Dole

From: Alec Vachon *AV*

Re: Sign Ons

1. Letter to Secretary Shalala Re Workshop on Autism

Senators Grassley and Harkin have asked you to sign a letter (draft attached) to HHS Secretary Shalala asking her to direct the Surgeon General to convene a workshop on autism.

This looks to be a good thing. Incidentally, we have received a letter from a Kansas family (Donna and Dick Emerson of Stillwell) encouraging you to support this workshop.

~~DO YOU WISH TO SIGN THIS LETTER?~~

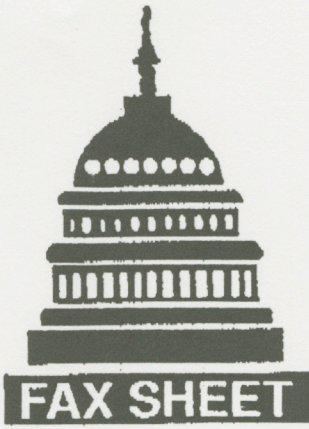
Yes ~~_____~~ No _____

2. Joint Resolution Re "National Down Syndrome Awareness Month"

Senator Moynihan asks if you will co-sponsor the attached resolution designating October 1993 and 1994 as "National Down Syndrome Awareness Month." This resolution looks fine and purely ceremonial.

~~DO YOU WISH TO CO-SPONSOR THIS RESOLUTION?~~

Yes ~~_____~~ No _____



Senator Chuck Grassley (Iowa)

Senate Hart Building, Room SH-135

Washington, D.C. 20510-1501

(202) 224-3744

Attn:

Lisa Crick

DATE: _____

TO: _____

OF: _____

FROM: *Shane Keith*

Will call you Thurs. if I don't hear back from you before then.

*Thanks,
Shane Keith*

TYPE OF DOCUMENT: _____

Total Number of Pages, Including Cover Sheet: *3*

Dear Colleague:

The purpose of this letter is to ask you to join us in requesting that Secretary Shalala direct the Surgeon General to convene a workshop on autism. The intended outcome of this workshop would be a comprehensive, nationwide strategy for better meeting the needs of individuals with autism.

Currently, there is an insufficient number of professionals with the knowledge and training necessary to meet the needs of children and adults with autism. Children with autism are too often undiagnosed or misdiagnosed, are too often placed in inappropriate settings without needed supports or services, are too often isolated from learning and from peers, and are too often punished for neurologically-based behaviors that are misunderstood as being intentional. Many young adults with autism leave the educational system destined for an existence which lacks both dignity and independence.

This is a devastating waste of human life that need not happen. All children deserve to have the proper identification of their needs and the educational and adult services that will assist them in reaching their fullest potentials.

A Surgeon General's Workshop would bring together parents, professionals, and individuals with autism to discuss unmet needs, current research, best practices, and state-of-the-art programs. This opportunity for discussion will lead to the development of new models for professional training, early diagnosis and intervention, educational service delivery and adult supports for individuals with autism. A comprehensive, nationwide strategy encompassing these areas will lead to better outcomes for these individuals.

Please join us in signing the enclosed letter to Secretary Shalala showing our support for a Surgeon General's Workshop on Autism.

Please notify our staff of your interest by April 23, 1993. You may contact either office:

Senator Harkin's staff contact: Linda Hinton - 224-6265
Senator Grassley's staff contact: Shannon Royce - 224-3744

Sincerely,

Charles Grassley
United States Senator

Tom Harkin
United States Senator

Donna Shalala
Secretary of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Shalala:

The purpose of this letter is to request that you direct the Surgeon General to convene a workshop on autism. The intended outcome of this workshop would be a comprehensive, nationwide strategy for better meeting the needs of individuals with autism.

Currently, there is an insufficient number of professionals with the knowledge and training necessary to meet the needs of children and adults with autism. Children with autism are too often undiagnosed or misdiagnosed, placed in inappropriate settings without needed supports or services, isolated from learning and from peers, or punished for neurologically-based behaviors that are misunderstood as being intentional. Many young adults with autism leave the educational system destined for an existence which lacks both dignity and independence.

A Surgeon General's Workshop would bring together parents, professionals, and individuals with autism to discuss unmet needs, current research, best practices, and state-of-the-art programs. This opportunity for discussion will lead to the development of new models for professional training, early diagnosis and intervention, educational service delivery and adult supports for individuals with autism. A comprehensive, nationwide strategy encompassing these areas will lead to better outcomes for these individuals.

We feel certain that such a workshop would result in a practical plan of action that can be used throughout the country by educators, health services professionals and parents. This would ensure that every child and adult with autism has an opportunity to become a productive citizen.

We, the undersigned members of Congress, wholeheartedly support and join in this request. Thank you for your concern and your consideration of this matter.