May 23, 2019

The Honorable Frank Pallone  
Chairman  
House Committee on Energy & Commerce  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Energy & Commerce  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Anna Eshoo  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Health  
House Committee on Energy & Commerce  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Burgess  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Health  
House Committee on Energy & Commerce  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member Walden, Chairwoman Eshoo, and Ranking Member Burgess:

As three of the leading proponents of the Autism Collaboration, Accountability, Research, Education, and Support (CARES) Act of 2019 (H.R. 1058), we respectfully request that the Committee on Energy & Commerce consider H.R. 1058 as soon as possible to allow for the full House consideration before the July 4th recess.

The Autism CARES Act of 2019 is the top priority for our three organizations, that collectively represent millions of people with autism, their families, and the networks of researchers, training programs, and universities that are working to meet the needs of the autism community. In addition, a coalition of leading disability, children, provider, and patient advocacy organizations are supporting H.R. 1058 and have signed the enclosed letter of support. With 97 cosponsors in the House and 22 cosponsors in the Senate, the Autism CARES Act of 2019 enjoys strong bipartisan and bicameral support.

As you know, existing provisions of law pertaining to federal efforts on autism will lapse at the end of the current fiscal year if Congress does not act. The consequences of a lapse would be extremely detrimental to individuals and families across the nation. For example, failure to reauthorize the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) programs, which provide long-term, graduate level interdisciplinary training as well as interdisciplinary services and care, would diminish our nation’s clinical capacity to provide diagnostic and intervention services to more than 106,000 children and families. Failure to reauthorize would also degrade the current and emerging workforce of knowledge and skills that are essential for supporting people with autism across the lifespan – including 33,000 graduate-level trainees and more than 170,000 practicing professionals reached each year through training and continuing education activities.

Given the broad support across the aisle and in both chambers, we urge you to work expeditiously to pass the Autism CARES Act through the Committee early in June to allow for expedited consideration and passage in the House before July. We look forward to working with you to pass the bill and thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Respectfully,