

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4160

To establish a Global Autism Assistance Program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 24, 2021

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey (for himself, Ms. BASS, Mr. MICHAEL F. DOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. MEUSER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To establish a Global Autism Assistance Program.

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 Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. GLOBAL AUTISM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

6 (a) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—The Adminis-
7 trator for the United States Agency for International De-
8 velopment shall establish and administer a health and edu-
9 cation grant program, to be known as the Global Autism
10 Assistance Program, to—

1 (1) support activities under subsection (c)(2) by
2 nongovernmental organizations and other service
3 providers, including advocacy groups, focused on au-
4 tism spectrum disorder (ASD) in developing coun-
5 tries; and

6 (2) establish a program, to be known as the
7 Train the Trainers Program, under subsection (d) to
8 train health and education professionals working
9 with children with ASD in developing countries.

10 (b) DESIGNATION OF ELIGIBLE REGIONS.—Not later
11 than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act,
12 the Administrator, in consultation with research, advo-
13 cacy, and service organizations for individuals with ASD,
14 shall designate not fewer than two regions in developing
15 countries that are determined to—

16 (1) require assistance in addressing the needs
17 of people with ASD, their families, and systems that
18 serve them;

19 (2) have sufficient familiarity with issues re-
20 lated to ASD to make effective use of the Global Au-
21 tism Assistance Program.

22 (c) SELECTION OF IMPLEMENTING NGO.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
24 after the designation of eligible regions pursuant to
25 subsection (b), the Administrator shall select and

1 award a grant under this section to a nongovern-
2 mental organization with experience in ASD-related
3 issues to implement the Global Autism Assistance
4 Program through selection and awarding of grants
5 to local service providers and advocacy groups fo-
6 cused on ASD.

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

13 (A) EDUCATION AND OUTREACH TO THE
14 PUBLIC.—Use public service announcements
15 and other public media to help the public be-
16 come more aware of the signs of ASD so that
17 children with ASD can be diagnosed and access
18 evidence-based interventions earlier.

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

1 other suitable alternatives, and dissemination of
2 educational aids and guides to help parents
3 with their children's development.

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

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

18 (3) APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS.—

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

1 such implementing nongovernmental organiza-
2 tion may require.

3 (B) ESTABLISHMENT OF SCREENING
4 BOARD.—

5 (i) IN GENERAL.—The implementing
6 nongovernmental organization responsible
7 for implementing the Global Autism Assist-
8 ance Program shall establish a screening
9 board to be known as the Project Advisory
10 Board to review for content and appro-
11 priateness applications from local service
12 providers or advocacy groups submitted in
13 accordance with subparagraph (A).

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

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

24 (II) A member of the Project Ad-
25 visory Board may continue to serve

1 after the expiration of the term of
2 such member until such time as a suc-
3 cessor is appointed.

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

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

1 (V) Membership of the Project
2 Advisory Board shall be chosen so as
3 to ensure objectivity and balance and
4 to reduce the potential for conflicts of
5 interest.

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

11 (d) TRAIN THE TRAINERS.—The implementing non-
12 governmental organization, acting on behalf of the Admin-
13 istrator, in consultation with the Project Advisory Board,
14 shall establish a program, to be known as the Train the
15 Trainers Program, to—

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

21 (2) conduct training through biomedical con-
22 ferences in at least two of the regions designated
23 pursuant to subsection (b), including bringing med-
24 ical and psychological specialists from the United
25 States to train and educate parents, health profes-

1 sionals, caregivers, community health workers, and
2 others who serve people with ASD, including train-
3 ing related to—

4 (A) biomedical interventions that can im-
5 prove the health and wellbeing of people with
6 ASD;

7 (B) how nutrition, various metabolic issues
8 and other variables can impact behavior; and

9 (C) various evidence-based habilitative and
10 other therapies including but not limited to—

11 (i) applied behavior analysis and other
12 evidence-based early intensive behavior
13 interventions;

14 (ii) occupational therapy; and

15 (iii) speech language pathology;

16 (D) other evidence-based interventions and
17 strategies that are effective at improving the
18 health and well-being for people with ASD; and

19 (E) other evidence-based practices as de-
20 termined by the grantee and based on local
21 needs; and

22 (3) conduct post-workshop follow-up technical
23 support and assistance.

24 (e) FUNDING.—To carry out this section, the Admin-
25 istrator shall allocate amounts that have been appro-

1 priated or otherwise made available to the United States
2 Agency for International Development.

3 (f) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Administrator shall sub-
4 mit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House
5 of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Rela-
6 tions of the Senate on an annual basis a report on activi-
7 ties carried out under this section during the prior cal-
8 endar year.

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