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Title: Recognizing April 2023 as Autism Acceptance & Awareness Month in the City of Philadelphia, and commending the work of the Philadelphia Autism Project.

Sponsors: Councilmember Driscoll, Councilmember Harry, Councilmember Squilla, Councilmember Bass, Councilmember Vaughn, Councilmember Jones, Councilmember Gilmore Richardson, Councilmember Phillips, Councilmember Gauthier, Councilmember Thomas, Councilmember Brooks

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Recognizing April 2023 as Autism Acceptance & Awareness Month in the City of Philadelphia, and commending the work of the Philadelphia Autism Project.

WHEREAS, April is National Autism Acceptance and Awareness Month and Autism Awareness month in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, a time to educate our community about autism, also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder (“ASD”), a complex neurological condition that affects, in varying degrees, language, and social skill development, characterized by differences in communication and social interactions, repetitive behaviors and movement, impacting individuals of all racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, The 2014 Pennsylvania Census Report identified over 4,167 individuals in Philadelphia County with autism receiving services - more than double the previously documented number - the majority of whom are between the ages of 5 and 17 years old, with the number of adults over 21 years old increasing as the population ages; and

WHEREAS, According to estimates from the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 54 children has been identified with ASD, yet another indicator that this intellectual disability is, if not increasingly frequent, more likely to be diagnosed; and

WHEREAS, A recent retrospective study of a largely representational cohort of children in the Philadelphia region who received primary healthcare within the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (“CHOP”) Care Network found a prevalence of ASD at 3.2% across the cohort or roughly 1 in 31 within the cohort; and

WHEREAS, The average age of a child within the CHOP study when diagnosed with ASD was 3.93 years, this is a positive result because earlier detection of ASD contributes to better social and health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, The work of organizations such as the Philadelphia Autism Project is vital in raising awareness around and acceptance of ASD as a common disability experienced by many in our City; and

WHEREAS, The Philadelphia Autism Project offers many support services such as life skills training, support for parents and guardians, and a community to belong to; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Recognizing April 2023 as Autism Acceptance & Awareness Month in the City of Philadelphia, and commending the work of the Philadelphia Autism Project; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to the Philadelphia Autism Project as evidence of the admiration and respect of this body.