

Legislation Text

File #: 150206, **Version:** 0

Recognizing April 2015 as Autism Awareness Month in honor of individuals living with Autism, their families and those working to improve the quality of life for the entire Autism community.

WHEREAS, April is National Autism Awareness Month. Autism, also known as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), describes a complex neurological disorder that affects, in varying degrees, language and social skill development, characterized by challenges in communication and social interactions, repetitive behaviors and movement; and

WHEREAS, In 2014, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that 1 in 68 children, that is 1 in 42 boys and 1 in 189 girls, in the United States will meet the criteria for an ASD diagnosis; and

WHEREAS, The Autism Services, Education, Resources, & Training Collaborative (ASERT) released the Pennsylvania Autism Census Update in 2014 and found that in Philadelphia, the number of individuals with autism receiving services has more than doubled from 2005 to 2011, and despite increased awareness many adults with autism remain misdiagnosed, undiagnosed or are not receiving services; and

WHEREAS, Karen Krivit, a licensed social worker and the Training and Resource Specialist at Elwyn's Philadelphia Early Intervention Program, has been a leader in outreach to underserved individuals and families, through her direct community based practice and by providing training and consultation to day care centers, and community and professional groups; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Krivit's demonstrated commitment is evidenced by her development of the A-List Annual Autism Resource Guide, the Philadelphia Autism Network Workshops, the Philadelphia Professional Autism Networking workgroup, and more recently her video series that addresses cultural differences and other roadblocks that prevent individuals and families from accessing needed services; and

WHEREAS, The Free Library of Philadelphia, under the leadership of Siobhan A. Reardon, is actively working to ensure that their libraries are welcoming environments for individuals and families living with autism, including efforts to develop sensory story time and other programming that is responsive to the needs of children and adults living with autism; and

WHEREAS, The Free Library is working with the Philadelphia Autism Project in our efforts to create accessible physical hubs throughout the community to disseminate Philadelphia specific autism resources, promote awareness initiatives, and serve as connection sites for individuals and families living with autism; and

WHEREAS, The Building Owners & Managers Association (BOMA) of Philadelphia warmly embraced the idea for Philadelphia to Light It Up Blue, to raise awareness of autism; and

WHEREAS, BOMA has worked with their members to make this celebration a reality so buildings in Philadelphia will light up blue on World Autism Awareness Day, Thursday April 2nd, for the first time ever in Philadelphia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That we hereby recognize April 2015 as Autism Awareness Month in honor of individuals living with Autism, their families and those working to improve the quality of life for the entire Autism community.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That an Engrossed copy of this resolution be presented to Karen Krivit of Elwyn, as evidence of the sincere sentiments of this legislative body.