

**Joint Resolution No. 13****(House Joint Resolution No. 16)**

A House Joint Resolution concerning

**Center for Excellence for Autism in Maryland**

FOR the purpose of urging the University of Maryland, the University of Maryland Medical Center, The Johns Hopkins University, The Johns Hopkins ~~Hospital~~ Health System, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to investigate the feasibility of working collaboratively in the field of autism research with the objective of establishing joint research and clinical programs that could compete for National Institutes of Health funding as a Center for Excellence for Autism in Maryland; and generally relating to the establishment of a Center for Excellence for Autism in Maryland.

WHEREAS, Best estimates indicate that one in 500 children born in the State will be diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, a disorder that causes severe impairments in language and communication; and

WHEREAS, There is evidence that the incidence of autism in Maryland is on the rise; and

WHEREAS, The Children's Health Act of 2000 authorizes the National Institutes of Health to provide up to \$40,000,000 over a 5-year period to public or nonprofit private entities to establish centers of excellence in autism and pervasive developmental disabilities epidemiology for the purpose of collecting and analyzing information on the number, incidence, correlates, and causes of autism and related developmental disabilities and basic and clinical research into autism, including investigations into the cause, diagnosis, early detection, prevention, control, and treatment of autism; and

WHEREAS, Centers of excellence under the Children's Health Act of 2000 may use the facilities of a single institution, or may be formed from a consortium of cooperating institutions; and

WHEREAS, The diverse symptoms and etiology of autism require a high level of activity in the widest variety of scientific fields, from genetics and neurology to neuroimaging, immunology, and gastroenterology, if effective treatments and a cure are to be found quickly; and

WHEREAS, The University of Maryland, the University of Maryland Medical Center, The Johns Hopkins University, and The Johns Hopkins ~~University Hospital~~ Health System are top tier research and medical institutions in Maryland which are already actively involved in different aspects of autism research and treatment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the University of Maryland, the University of Maryland Medical Center, The Johns Hopkins University, and The Johns Hopkins ~~University Hospital~~ Health System work