



AUTISM SPEAKS®

May 16, 2017

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chairwoman
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx, Ranking Member Scott, and Committee Members:

Autism Speaks is dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. One of our strategic focuses is improving supports related to the transition students with autism make from secondary education to life in the community, and career and technical education (CTE) can provide a great opportunity for individuals with autism to make that transition successfully.

Over the next 10 years, 500,000 youth with autism will exit the nation's schools and face what is recognized across the field as a "services cliff." Too many individuals are left unsupported and too often do not become productive members of society: over one-third of young adults with autism never get a job or continue education after high school. Employment is a primary element in the long-term independence and community integration of people with autism, so it is essential that the education system provide high-quality career training to help students with autism secure and keep meaningful employment after school.

Autism Speaks supports the passage of H.R. 2353, the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, because we believe the legislation will help students with autism achieve positive employment outcomes after school. This bill accounts for the real-world job markets in local communities and ties CTE training to that demand; it provides robust federal support to local- and state-driven efforts to improve training; it ensures that these programs are accountable, including through statutory links to special education supports in the Every Student Succeeds Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and it incentivizes continued innovation in the field.

We at Autism Speaks are hopeful that the Committee on Education and the Workforce will look positively on this legislation, and we stand ready to assist the Committee however we can on this matter.

Kind Regards,

Kevin Roy

Kevin F. Roy
Executive Vice President, Advocacy
Autism Speaks

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