



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0047-2018, **Version:** *

Res. No. 47

Resolution calling upon the United States Department of Justice to fund projects that aid in the protection and location of missing persons with autism.

By Council Member Cornegy

Whereas, Autism is one of a group of neurodevelopmental disorders, known as autism spectrum disorders, that are characterized by social impairments, difficulties with verbal and nonverbal communication, and repetitive behaviors; and

Whereas, Approximately 30,000 children and teenagers in New York have been identified as having autism; and

Whereas, Nearly half of children with an autism spectrum disorder attempt to wander or bolt from supervised areas, and more than half of those that wander go missing; and

Whereas, In October 2013, Avonte Oquendo, a 14 year-old autistic teenager who had a tendency to wander from safe environments, went missing from his school in Queens; and

Whereas, Despite a Citywide effort to locate Avonte, the search ended tragically with the discovery of his remains in January 2014; and

Whereas, The United States Department of Justice operates the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Assistance Program, which provides funds for projects that aid in the protection and location of missing seniors with Alzheimer's; and

Whereas, The Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Assistance Program funds local projects that develop outreach programs to increase awareness regarding the needs of missing persons with Alzheimer's,

implement processes for aiding in the location of lost persons with Alzheimer's, and provide training to local law enforcement agencies; and

Whereas, Seniors with Alzheimer's tend to wander and go missing, similar to those with autism, and are at a serious risk of injury or death if they are not located quickly; and

Whereas, Establishing a program for children with autism modeled upon the Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Assistance Program could benefit thousands of families with autistic children in New York City; and

Whereas, There is an urgent need to increase awareness regarding missing persons with autism and to develop systems for ensuring the timely location of children with autism that go missing; and

Whereas, Federal funding for such programs could help to prevent future tragedies like the death of Avonte Oquendo; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Department of Justice to fund projects that aid in the protection and location of missing persons with autism.

CP/KET
LS 486/Res 151/2014
LS 939
12/29/17