



April 29, 2025

Congressman Tim Walberg

Chair, House Committee on Education &
Workforce

Congressman Bobby Scott

Ranking Member, House Committee on
Education & Workforce

Submitted Via email

RE: April 28, 2025, markup on H. Res. 344

The Autism Society of America respectfully submits this statement for the record and thanks the Committee for holding this markup and including House Resolution 344 on today's agenda.

On March 27, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a proposed restructuring that raises significant concerns for the Autism community and the broader disability community. Foremost among these concerns is the proposed dismantling of the Administration for Community Living (ACL)—a move that, if implemented, would severely undermine the delivery of essential services to millions of Americans with disabilities.

ACL was established in 2012 to serve as a centralized agency integrating disability and aging programs, improving efficiency, and avoiding duplication across federal services. Its mission and structure have been essential in delivering coordinated, person-centered support, including nutrition programs, caregiver services, home and community-based supports, and independent living initiatives. Fragmenting ACL's responsibilities across multiple agencies—many of which lack disability-specific leadership, infrastructure, and accountability—threatens to reverse years of progress and create new bureaucratic barriers for those who already face systemic challenges.

The Autism Society strongly opposes this proposed restructuring and stands in unity on this issue with the broader disability community (see letter led by AAPD with over 400 sign-ons). At a time when the Autism community is expanding, and continues to face significant disparities in service access, such changes would deepen inequities and jeopardize the programs that enable individuals with Autism to thrive (see Autism Society's [Joint Statement](#)).

We urge the House Education and Workforce Committee to support and advance House Resolution 344. This resolution is a critical step toward ensuring transparency around the restructuring and safeguarding the future of the ACL's vital work. In particular, we are deeply concerned about the continued implementation of cornerstone legislation such as the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (DD Act) and the Assistive Technology Act of 2004 (AT Act).



The **DD Act** funds a nationwide network of programs that promote research, self-determination, full community participation, and advocacy for people with developmental disabilities. It supports Developmental Disabilities Councils, Protection and Advocacy Systems, University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs), and projects of national significance—all of which help ensure individuals with developmental disabilities can live independently, access services, and participate fully in their communities.

The **AT Act** ensures that individuals with disabilities of all ages have access to assistive technology—tools that are critical to education, employment, communication, and daily living. This includes devices like speech-generating tools, screen readers, mobility aids, and more. State AT programs funded through this law help people acquire, reuse, and learn how to use these technologies. For the Autism community, these resources are especially crucial, as approximately thirty percent are non-speaking and rely on such tools to communicate and engage with the world ([NIH study](#)).

If the restructuring proceeds, it is essential that we know which agencies will be responsible for implementing these important laws and how continuity, accountability, and disability expertise will be maintained throughout the transition.

The Autism Society stands ready to work with the Committee to ensure that the rights and expansive needs of the disability community remain protected throughout this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christopher S. Banks".

Christopher S. Banks, President and CEO of the Autism Society