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Office of Congresswoman  
**KAY GRANGER**



12TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

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Dear Friends,

The following update is the first of regular "Congressional Health Updates" I will be sending out in order to keep you updated on what I have been working on. I hope that you find this update informative, and your feedback on the issues I talk about will be helpful. If you would like to continue to receive my "Congressional Health Update," please click [here](#).

Sincerely,

Kay Granger

#### **CONGRESSIONAL STUDY GROUP ON PUBLIC HEALTH RESOLUTION**

In 2006, I founded this group along with Reps. Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) in order to educate our colleagues in Congress about public health issues. This week, along with my Study Group co-chairs, I will be introducing a resolution calling for an increased federal commitment to prioritizing prevention and public health. Specifically, it calls for the investment in federal public health programs to be at least one percent of total federal spending within five years.

The resolution was developed with the Trust for America's Health (TFAH) to complement its new report entitled *Prevention for a Healthier America: Investments in Disease Prevention Yield Significant Savings, Stronger Communities*. TFAH finds that an investment of \$10 per person per year in proven community-based prevention programs could save the country more than \$16 billion annually within five years.

Our country will never contain health care costs until we place a higher priority on preventive care. The TFAH report demonstrates how important it is for us to invest in preventive measures and encourage early detection. The benefits not only create healthier lifestyles, but also lower health care costs.

#### **HELPING HANDS FOR AUTISM ACT (H.R. 6282)**

Since autism was first described just 60 years ago, the prevalence of autism has dramatically increased. Autism spectrum disorders will be diagnosed in more than 25,000 U.S. children this year – more than new pediatric cases of AIDS, diabetes, and cancer combined.

Too often families feel overwhelmed after diagnosis and lost as to where to turn for help. That is why I have introduced the *Helping HANDS for Autism Act* which creates a grant program to provide "autism navigator" services to help families navigate the web of services and care. Navigators will help guide families to current health, education, housing and social services that are often available. The program will help connect families to important treatment options soon after diagnosis.

The bill is supported by Autism Speaks and the Autism Society of America. This week, Reps. Thaddeus McCotter (R-MI), John McHugh (R-NY), and Mike Turner (R-OH) signed on as cosponsors. Currently, there are 14 cosponsors on the bill.

#### **MEETING WITH DR. THOMAS INSEL**

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Dr. Insel is Director of the National Institute of Mental Health and chairs the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee. Congress established this Committee in 2006 with passage of the Combating Autism Act. The Committee is charged with making sure we have the best research going on. For example, nearly \$188 million per year is spent on autism research; however, more of that research funding is going to studying risk factors (28%) rather than researching treatments (14%). We also discussed *the Helping HANDS for Autism Act* that I have introduced. To learn more about this bill, please visit my [website](#).

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

**Washington DC Office**  
320 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515  
Ph. 202-225-5071  
Fax 202-225-5683

**District Office**  
1701 River Run Road, Suite 407  
Fort Worth, TX 76107  
Ph. 817-338-0909  
Fax 817-335-5852

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