

From: Baker, Josh
To: Soura, Christian <ChristianSoura@gov.sc.gov>
Date: 1/23/2013 12:20:48 PM
Subject: Autism Letter
Attachments: (2012.12.21) Autism Speaks Response.docx

Attached is the first draft of the letter that I wrote and below are some talking points that were the basis for the conversation with Rep Patrick.

Josh

I appreciate your advocacy for those who benefit from autism-related therapies and their families.

I assure you that Governor Haley has worked over the years worked as a legislator and now governor to secure such resources for the families who need them, including a recommendation for \$5 million in funding increases for the Department of Disabilities and Special needs for this upcoming fiscal year.

Portions of this money would secure services to allow some of South Carolina's most vulnerable citizens to continue to live and potentially thrive in the least restrictive environment possible.

Despite this, we are unable to be positively responsive to this request as South Carolina elected to not submit an Essential Health Benefits selection package to the US Department of Health and Human Services (USHHS).

Consistent with this decision we could not augment such a package to include autism-related therapies.

In a letter to USHHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius on October 1, 2012, Governor Haley laid out reasons for this decision including

- Opposition to ACA
- Incomplete federal rulemaking
- Lack of flexibility and control states will have over their local healthcare systems

Please understand that this is not a negative assessment of the therapies for which you advocate. Rather, the Administration's consistent opposition to the implementation of ACA and desire to protect individuals' healthcare decisions precludes us from fulfilling this specific request.

This Administration will continue to advocate for more flexibility and local control over health decisions and regulations to meet the needs of South Carolinians in a way that we believe the Federal Government cannot.

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