

COUNTY OF



ALLEGHENY

RICH FITZGERALD  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

## *Proclamation*

**WHEREAS**, Autism Awareness Month is observed annually in April; this year, throughout the month, the Autism Connection of PA is celebrating the organization entering its 25<sup>th</sup> year of providing a lifeline for families and individuals affected by autism through education, advocacy and support; and

**WHEREAS**, thousands of individuals and organizations will participate in autism-related events and educational activities to increase understanding and acceptance and to foster worldwide support for those struggling with autism spectrum disorder; and

**WHEREAS**, Autism refers to a range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech, and nonverbal communication as well as by unique strengths; there is no known single cause of autism, but increased awareness as well as early diagnosis, intervention, and access to services lead to significantly improved outcomes; and

**WHEREAS**, Autism is estimated to affect 1 in 59 children in the United State; almost 5,000 people in Allegheny County, most of which are children, receive autism-related services; and

**WHEREAS**, Autism Connection of PA was founded by parents in 1996; it is a nonprofit organization serving thousands of people seeking help for autism concerns; professional staff, all parents who understand, provide telephone support, weekly autism news, autism-friendly activities and coordinate 76 support groups across Pennsylvania; and

**WHEREAS**, Autism Connection of PA works with multiple local associations such as the Cultural Trust, Carnegie Library System, the Carnegie Museums, the Allegheny County Airport Authority and more to provide autism friendly interactions to those who need it; the group also provides monthly training to help police departments, fire departments, schools and others to have better interactions with those on the spectrum; Allegheny County is fortunate to have the organization in our community; we thank its board, staff and supporters for their incredible work and dedication to helping autistic people live their best lives in Allegheny County and beyond.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that I, County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, by virtue of the authority vested in me, do hereby proclaim April 2020 as “Autism Awareness Month” and April 1, 2020 as “Autism Connection Day” in Allegheny County. To encourage our residents to learn more about the disorder and to support those affected by it, we are lighting the Courthouse blue throughout the month of April.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the County of Allegheny to be affixed this 1<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2020.

*Rich Fitzgerald*

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RICH FITZGERALD