



Board of Commissioners

PRESS RELEASE

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Commissioners Proclaim April as Autism Awareness Month

PAINESVILLE, Ohio, April 4, 2025 – The Lake County Board of Commissioners proudly declared April 2025 as Autism Awareness Month at their April 3, 2025 Commissioners' meeting. This initiative aims to promote understanding, acceptance, and inclusion for individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in our community.

Autism is a developmental disability that affects individuals across various ages and backgrounds. According to recent statistics, approximately 5.8 million adults in the United States were diagnosed with Autism in 2023, including about 2.1% of adults aged 18-84 in Ohio. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that in 2024, one in 36 children in the United States will be diagnosed with ASD.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners emphasizes the importance of creating supportive policies and fostering positive attitudes that enable individuals with developmental disabilities to lead independent and fulfilling lives. By actively participating in community activities and recognizing everyone's unique contributions, we create a culture of understanding and acceptance.

“Autism Awareness Month serves as a vital reminder of the diverse talents and perspectives that individuals with Autism bring to our community,” said Commission President Richard J. Regovich. “Inclusion is not just a goal; it is our commitment to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to thrive.”

"Thank you, Commissioners, for the opportunity to be here today to honor Autism Awareness Month. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects millions, with approximately 5.1 million individuals across the United States living with this condition. In Ohio, around 2.1% of adults are on the autism spectrum, highlighting the importance of awareness and support. We are fortunate to offer exemplary educational programs, including our Broadmoor School, which provides outstanding options for both education and prevocational training. Furthermore, we take pride in being Ohio's only county board to have launched the Imagine Program. This groundbreaking initiative is specifically designed for adults looking to enhance their vocational and employment skills. Not only does it equip individuals with essential tools, but it also



From the left: Commissioners Morris W. Beverage II, John T. Plecnik, Elfie Roman, Commissioner Richard J. Regovich, Josh Thompson and Rachael Urbanek.

opens the door to meaningful employment opportunities,” said Elfie Roman, Superintendent of the Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities/Deepwood (LCBDD). Together, let us continue to advocate for understanding, inclusion, and growth for individuals on the autism spectrum.”

“By increasing awareness of Autism, we can work together to dismantle barriers and create more meaningful opportunities for individuals and families affected by this condition,” stated Commissioner John T. Plecnik. “Together, we can build a society that values every individual.”

“We all have compassion, and we all have something to offer,” added Commissioner Morris W. Beverage III. “During Autism Awareness Month, I encourage all residents to engage, learn, and celebrate the strengths of individuals with Autism.”

Individuals with Autism can thrive in various community settings with appropriate support, including social groups, advocacy organizations, and recreational programs. Many also excel in the workforce, demonstrating exceptional focus and specialized skills in roles tailored to their strengths.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners honors the self-advocates, family members, professionals, and community members who work tirelessly to create opportunities for those with Autism. In recognition of their efforts, we invite all residents of Lake County to join us during Autism Awareness Month to promote understanding and inclusion.

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