



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Charles J. Fuschillo Jr.

## Senator Fuschillo Sponsors Autism Awareness Event

CHARLES J. FUSCHILLO JR. April 4, 2012

| ISSUE: **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**



### *Quilt Display As Part of April "Autism Spectrum Disorders Awareness Month"*

Senator Charles J. Fuschillo, Jr. (R-Merrick) recently partnered with Autism Speaks in helping raise awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Senator Fuschillo arranged for quilts made by Autism Speaks to be displayed in the State Legislative Office Building in Albany for three weeks as part of Autism Awareness Month. Merrick resident Michael Giangregorio, the father of an Autistic child and Autism

Speaks' Long Island Volunteer Executive Chair, helped Senator Fuschillo coordinate the quilt display.

Each piece of the quilts are from team shirts worn by walkers at Autism Speaks' Long Island Autism Walk. The Long Island Autism Walk, one of the largest in the United States, is an annual event at Jones Beach which helps raise funding for autism research. Over 30,000 participated in last year's walk, which raised over \$1.3 million.

"These quilts are a very moving way to tell the stories of families affected by autism. Displaying them will help remind us how much of an impact autism has on our communities and the need for continued awareness and research," said Senator Fuschillo. "I thank the members of Autism Speaks, especially Michael Giangregorio, for helping to put this display together."

Autism Spectrum Disorders affect individuals of all ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups and are becoming more prevalent. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that autism now affects one in 88 children. More children are affected by autism than those with AIDS, diabetes, cancer, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, and Down Syndrome combined.

Senator Fuschillo has been a staunch supporter of the fight against Autism. Most recently, he authored New York State's autism insurance reform law. The law will enable individuals with autism spectrum disorders to receive insurance coverage for screening, diagnosis and treatment. The law will save families with autism tens of thousands of dollars a year in out of pocket costs for autism treatment and therapies which many insurance companies refuse to cover. The law takes effect on November 1st.

*Picture Caption: Senator Fuschillo stands in front of Autism Speaks' quilts on display in the State Legislative Office Building in Albany. Senator Fuschillo arranged for the exhibit to help raise awareness*

*about Autism Spectrum Disorders.*