

Broder Law Group, P.C. will keep you up to date on legal issues affecting special education.

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Congressmen push proposal that would benefit autism community nationwide

A New Jersey congressman teamed up with a Pennsylvania counterpart to introduce legislation Tuesday that would improve and expand services for families that include a person with autism.

If signed by the President, the legislation would authorize \$350 million worth of additional treatment and support resources.

Called the Expanding the Promise for Individuals with Autism Act (EPIAA), the plan offers concrete ways to evaluate and expand both the treatments available and the services offered to people with autism.

Although just formally introduced, the proposed Act has bipartisan support in Congress and the support of Autism Speaks and the Autism Society of America.

Find out more about the **Expanding the Promise for Individuals with Autism Act** on the [website of U.S. Rep Chris Smith \(R-NJ\)](#).

NJ School boards protest rule that limits age ranges in special ed classrooms

School boards across New Jersey are lining up against a state regulation that narrows the range of ages than can be combined in an elementary school's special education class.

The Department of Education's regulation calls for a range of three years within one class rather than four years. School officials say that will unfairly increase costs.

Led by the Burlington County Special Services School District in January of this year, school districts from Bergen to Cape May counties have joined together in a complaint brought to the Council on Local Mandates. That bipartisan body -- independent of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of state government -- makes rulings about whether state regulations are or are

not "unfunded mandates." Such mandates were outlawed in New Jersey except in certain circumstances, preventing the state from forcing local government bodies to take on expenses of required services.

The state claims the change will help it meet federal requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act, and that the change should not qualify as an unfunded mandate because Special Services Districts will recoup all costs from the individual districts sending children to those classes.

The Council on Local Mandates' decision is not expected before early May. **Find out more about school district's complaints, the state's response, and the Council's proceedings at the [Council's website](#).**