

[My Address]

3 September 2012

President Barack Obama
Obama for America
PO Box 803638
Chicago, IL 60680

President Obama:

My name is [Dad Enough]. I am a [age] year old software developer living in Baltimore, Maryland, and I have voted in every election since my eighteenth birthday, though this is not what really matters. What does matter is that I am the father of two young boys. [The Monster], my four-year-old son, was diagnosed with Autism in January, after years of suspecting that he was on the spectrum and fighting with doctors to get them to make the diagnosis. He has been receiving services from Baltimore City since he was two, and is attending a tailored, reverse-inclusion program in the public schools this fall.

When you last ran for election in 2008, Autism was not an issue on my radar – my son was just six months old when you were elected, and these things are not recognizable at that age. Suffice it to say, in the intervening four years, Autism has become a major issue that factors into my decisions regarding for whom I will vote. Autism is a major medical issue, affecting at least 1 in every 88 children in this country, and 1 of every 54 boys – I do not think I can stress highly enough those numbers, or that I am being overly dramatic at calling such a state of affairs an epidemic.

When you ran for your current office in 2008, you made three distinct campaign promises regarding Autism:

- To appoint a federal-level coordinator to oversee autism efforts
- To mandate insurance coverage of autism treatment
- To fully fund the Combating Autism Act and other research initiatives

I think it is fair to say that you have not lived up to these campaign promises. (Politifact.com would agree with me.) Efforts such as the Interagency Autism Coordination Committee have been equally unsuccessful, when you consider that the first meeting of this committee did not happen until nine months after the Combating Autism Reauthorization Act was passed. However, there is a new election coming up, and it is the future that I am more interested in, rather than rehashing the past.

Mister President, I am asking what, if we decide to return you to the Presidency, you intend to do with regards to the Autism epidemic. I and other parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders want to know that the Administration will take our children's problems seriously. We want to know that you will allocate appropriate resources to help research and treat our children.

In this vein, I have a few questions:

- It took the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC) nine months to meet after the passage of the Combating Autism Reauthorization Act, and they do not seem to have done much towards coordinating anything with regards to autism research. Will you be taking a more active role in ensuring that they fulfill their mandate to coordinate federal research efforts and that they meet more frequently to address the community's concerns?
- While I make a decent salary and have my insurance coverage, I am finding that I have to pay out of pocket for some of my son's treatment. One of the changes to fund ACA, as I understand it, is an increase in the floor for deduction of medical benefits from 7.5% to 10%, which makes some of the treatments harder to afford. Has there been any consideration given to reversing this to help parents in similar situations afford needed care for their children?
- My insurance from my employer does cover Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), for example, but the plan does not cover ABA from any providers in my state. In the 2008 campaign, you promised to mandate coverage for Autism treatments. As ACA is implemented in full, will you be ensuring that recognized Autism treatments such as ABA are covered by all plans?
- The ACA will tax employer-provided insurance benefits above a certain threshold. Despite the fact that I make less than \$250,000 per year – an income level below which you stated you would not raise taxes – I'll now be taxed on these benefits. Will you be taking steps to prevent a tax increase on the middle class?

Mister President – I await your response. Thank you for your time and your courtesy in reading my questions.

Sincerely,

[Dad Enough]
Voter
Husband
Father of Two