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**ACT Today! Applauds the U.S. House of Representatives for Voting in Favor
of Insurance Coverage for Military Children with Autism**

NATIONWIDE, May 18, 2012 ACT Today! (Autism Care and Treatment Today!), a national non-profit organization whose mission is to provide access to care and treatment to children with autism, commends the U.S. House of Representatives for approving a bipartisan amendment this week, that would guarantee that retired Department of Defense members of the military receive autism insurance benefits for their children with autism. In addition, this bill removed spending caps for autism treatments that were previously in place.

ACT Today! led the first national campaign on behalf of military children with autism. The non-profit organization has distributed nearly 130 grants, in the past two years, through its ACT Today! for Military Families (ATMF) program. It was launched in July 2010. ATMF works to improve awareness and delivery of effective autism services, and provides financial assistance to military families to help defray out-of-pocket costs associated with autism treatments, services, and other quality of life programs.

"We are proud to help the children of our brave military families," says ACT Today!'s Executive Director Nancy Alspaugh-Jackson. "It is important for us to help those who protect our freedoms."

At present, members of the military lose their autism insurance benefits when they retire, even when medically retired as a result of being wounded in action. The amendment clarifies that coverage under TRICARE, the Department of Defense insurance program, should include medically necessary behavioral health treatments for autism, including applied behavior analysis (ABA). The bill also removes treatments spending caps previously in place.

"We are so relieved that the government now sees the need to extend ABA therapy to military children with autism, to our retired service members' families," says ACT Today!'s Founder/President and world-renowned autism expert Dr. Doreen Granpeesheh. "ABA therapy has proven to be one of the most effective – if not **the** most effective – forms of autism treatment to date. This new act of Congress will allow many deserving children the quality care and treatment they need in order to reach their highest potential."

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1 in every 88 children in America is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), making ASD more prevalent than juvenile diabetes, childhood cancer and pediatric AIDS combined. These disorders are characterized, in varying degrees, by difficulties in social interaction, verbal/nonverbal communication and repetitive behaviors. They include Autistic disorder, Rett syndrome, Childhood disintegrative disorder (CDD), Pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) and Asperger's syndrome.

For more information about ACT Today! for Military Families, visit: www.acttodayformilitaryfamilies.org.

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About ACT Today!:

ACT Today! (Autism Care and Treatment Today!) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness and providing treatment services and support to families of children with autism who cannot afford or access the necessary tools their children need to reach their full potential. For more information about ACT Today!, visit: www.act-today.org.

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