

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16) today applauded the Senate for including the “Caring for Military Kids with Autism Act” in its version of the National Defense Authorization Act. The Senate bill will now go to conference with the House legislation, [which also includes the language supported by Rooney](#) to expand access to autism treatments for military dependents.

“Many American families, including those of my two nephews, face the challenges of raising a child with autism. The Caring for Military Kids with Autism Act will go a long way toward helping military families meet those challenges.

“Military families in Florida and across the country deserve access to the best care possible, but TRICARE limits have prevented military children with autism from receiving the care they need. This common sense amendment ensures that the children of our troops and military retirees get the best care available. Now that the Senate has included this language in its version of the Defense Authorization Act, I am more confident than ever that these changes will become law.”

Under current regulations, dependents receive limited access to autism treatments, like applied behavioral analysis (ABA), due to the cap on the amount TRICARE may pay for these services on a yearly basis. The amendments included by the House and Senate clarify that military dependents with autism and dependents of retirees have access to medically necessary behavioral treatments like ABA. Rooney cosponsored the bipartisan “Caring for Military Kids with Autism Act,” H.R. 2288, which was sponsored by Rep. John Larsen (D-CT).

Rooney served as a military prosecutor in the Army JAG Corps and taught constitutional and criminal law at West Point. He serves on the House Armed Services Committee and House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

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